

ter, viii. 18. And his Destruction was of God (as the Author of the second Book of *Chronicles* observes, xxii. 7.) who prompted *Jehu* thus to understand his Command. Thus *Abarbinel* understands those Words, *he died there*. Not in *Megiddo*, mentioned before, but in that Execution of God's Judgments on the House of *Abab*.

Ver. 28. *And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers, in the city of David.*] Which Honour *Jehu* permitted to be done him, because he was descended from the good Prince *Jehoshaphat*. See 2 *Chron.* xxii. 9.

Ver. 29. *And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Abab, began Abaziah to reign over Judah.*] See the foregoing Chapter, ver. 25.

Ver. 30. *And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezabel heard of it, and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.*] In the Hebrew it is, *she put her eyes in paint*; that is, in *Stibium*, which made the Eyes look black, and was accounted beautiful; and also dilated the Eye-brows, and made the Eyes appear big; which, in some Countries, was also thought very amiable. See *Grotius*. This was not intended to tempt *Jehu* with her Beauty; but to keep up her Dignity and State to the very last: For she was extremely proud.

Ver. 31. *And as Jehu entred in at the gate, she said, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?*] She thought perhaps he would not meddle with a Woman; and therefore took upon her to rebuke, and upbraid him with what he had done against her Son; bidding him remember what became of *Zimri*, who was cut off by *Omri* his Father-in-law, the Founder of *Abab's* Family.

Ver. 32. *And he lift up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side, who? And there looked out to him two or three Eunuchs.*] Who, according to the Custom of the Eastern Countries, were wont to attend upon Queens in their Chambers.

Ver. 33. *And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down,*] See how suddenly Courtiers change with the Fortune of their Master.

And some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trod her under foot.] With his Horses. This some of the Jewish Doctors, particularly *Rabag* and *Kimchi*, look upon as a Punishment, according to the *Lex talionis*, like for like. As she had done, so she suffered. For she caused *Naboth* to be stoned; and now she was condemned to be stoned her self; for there were two Ways of stoning; either by throwing Stones at Malefactors, 'till they had knocked them down, and killed them; or by throwing them down upon the Stones from an high Place, and breaking them to Pieces. As *Amaziah* did with the Captives he took of Mount *Seir*, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 12. See *Selden*, Lib. i. *De Synedriis*, Cap. 5. p. 76, &c.

Ver. 34. *And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go see now this cursed woman, and bury her:*] That is, go and take Care of her Body, to see it decently buried.

For she is a kings daughter.] And was also the Wife, and the Mother of a King, which moved him to have this Regard to her, as all Men

naturally have to Royal Dignity; forgetting; in the mean Time, what *Elijah* had prophesied against her in his Hearing. Which he might easily do when he was merry, it is like, with eating and drinking liberally.

Ver. 35. *And they went out to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.*] All the rest being eaten by the Dogs. For it is probable, when the Horsemen were gone, who trod her under Foot, the Footmen stripped her, and left her naked in her own Blood; exposed to the hungry Dogs, that came out of the City and devoured her.

Ver. 36. *Wherefore they came again, and told him: and he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the prophet,*] Which he now called to Mind, as he did his Prophecy concerning *Abab* and his Sons.

Saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezabel:] 1 *Kings* xxi. 23.

Ver. 37. *And the carcase of Jezabel shall be as dung upon the face of the field, in the portion of Jezreel, so that they shall not say, This is Jezabel.*] No Memory of her; nothing whereby to know there had been such a Woman as *Jezabel*, should remain of her; suppose a Picture, or Effigies, to which Men might point, and say, this is *Jezabel*. In our Language, perhaps we should have said, *they shall not say, Here lies Jezabel*: For no Monument was made for her, she having no Sepulchre but in the Belly of Dogs. These Words are not mentioned in 1 *Kings* xxi. being sufficiently included in what is there recorded: But perfectly remembered by *Jehu*; who now more largely recites the Words of *Elijah*,

CHAP. X.

Verse 1. **A**ND *Abab* had seventy sons] It is likely that Grandsons are comprehended under the Name of Sons, as is usual in Scripture; though by several Wives, he might have as many Sons as *Gideon* had.

In Samaria:] Unto which Place the Ruler of *Jezreel* had carried them, when they heard how *Jehu* had killed *Joram*; for fear they should fall into his Hands. Or, perhaps, during the War with Syria, their Father had sent them thither, as a Place of Security (it being a strong City) in case of any ill Accident that might happen.

And Jehu wrote letters to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel,] The chief Noblemen of the Kingdom, who, I suppose, were fled thither with the King's Sons; and perhaps were met to deliberate what to do in this Juncture, whether or no to set up one of *Abab's* Sons to be their King.

And to the elders,] The principal Persons in *Samaria*.

And to those who brought up Ababs children, saying,] These are called *Omanim* (*Nourishers*) because they had the Care of his Children from their Infancy, and were now their Governours, as we call them; who were of his Kindred, ver. 11.

Ver. 2. *Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your masters sons are with you, and there*

there are with you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour :

Ver. 3. *Look even out the best and meetest of your masters sons, and set him on his fathers throne, and fight for your masters house.*] This he said, because, perhaps, he heard they were consulting about a Successor to *Abab*. Or rather he insults over them, and denounces War against them with Scorn and Derision, being secure of the Event, that they were not able to oppose him.

Ver. 4. *But they were exceeding afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him : how then shall we stand ?*] They were timorous Persons, bred up it is likely in Ease and Delicacy. For this Argument had little in it ; those two Kings being unarmed, without any Forces ; which they were furnished withal to defend themselves, and their Master's Sons.

Ver. 5. *And he that was over the house,*] The High Steward, as we call him, of the King's Household.

And he that was over the city,] The Governor of the City, who had all the Soldiers under his Command.

And the elders, and the bringers up of the kings children,] All the Senators, and the great Men that were intrusted with the Care of the King's Children.

Sent to Jebu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us ; we will not make any king : do thou that which is good in thine eyes.] They basely submit to his Pleasure, without making any Composition : Which it is likely they thought it to no Purpose to endeavour, and did not expect such rigorous Usage from him.

Ver. 6. *Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take the heads of your masters sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time : (now the kings sons being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up.)*] This is repeated, to shew the vile Spirit of these great Men ; that could destroy so many Royal Persons, of whom they had the Care, and who had offended no body.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass when the letter came to them, that they took the kings sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets,*] They seem not to have deliberated about the Matter, though in it self so horrid ; but instantly obeyed him.

And sent him them to Jezreel.] Following after themselves, as appears from ver. 11. expecting perhaps to be thanked for what they had so readily done ; but quite contrary, came to the same miserable End.

Ver. 8. *And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the kings sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps, at the entering of the gate, until the morning.*] The Gate was the Place of publick Concourse for Judgment, and other Business ; so that the laying them there, was to expose them to publick View, that every one might know there was none of *Abab's* Posterity left to reign over them.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people,*

Who were there gathered together, gazing upon this amazing Sight.

Ye be righteous :] Be not troubled ; for none of you are to blame in all this.

Behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him : but who slew all these ?] If any were guilty, he acknowledges it was himself. But since they had slain so many, why should he be to blame for slaying one ? since he had Authority from God for what he did.

Ver. 10. *Know now, that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Abab :*] In these Words he throws all the Guilt from off himself ; being only God's Instrument to punish the House of *Abab*, as he had foretold by *Elijah*. And therefore he resolved to proceed, 'till he had utterly extirpated all that depended on him.

For the LORD hath done] As if he had said, This is not my doing, but the LORD's : Whose Command I obey.

That which he spake by his servant Elisha.] He mentions what he denounced, rather than what *Elijah* commanded (x. 8.) because the Words of *Elijah* were publickly known ; whereas *Elisha's* were spoken in private, and not by himself, but by one of the Sons of the Prophets, ix. 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 11. *So Jebu slew all that remained of the house of Abab in Jezreel, and all his great men,*] Whom he had advanced to great Offices, or Dignities.

And his kinfolks,] All that had any relation to him.

And his priests,] Who had served him in his idolatrous Worship, and confirmed him in it.

Until he left him none remaining.] In that Place : But there were still some left in *Samaria*, ver. 17.

Ver. 12. *And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria.*] Having finished his Work in *Jezreel*, he went to prosecute it, in the chief City of the Kingdom ; which most needed Reformation.

And as he was at the sheering-house in the way,] In the Hebrew the Words are, *in the house of the shepherds binding*. For they bound the Feet of their Sheep, when they sheered them ; and this was the Place where the Shepherds of *Samaria* were wont to do it.

Ver. 13. *Jebu met with the brethren of Abaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye ? And they answered, We are the brethren of Abaziah, and we are going to salute the children of the king, and the children of the queen.*] That is, the Children of *Foram*, and the Children of *Jezabel*. But the Brethren of *Abaziah* were carried Captive before this, as we read 2 Chron. xxi. 17. therefore by Brethren we must understand his Brother's Sons, as it is explained in 2 Chron. xxii. 8.

Ver. 14. *And he said, Take them alive. And they took them, and he slew them at the pit of the sheering-house, even two and forty men ; neither left he any of them.*] They were allied to the Family of *Abab* by the Mother's Side (viii. 18.) and therefore he thought his Commission (ix. 8, 9.) extended thus far ; being afraid also, it is likely, that they might, if they lived, be avenged of

of him for the Death of *Foram*, *Abaziah*, *Jezabel*, and their Children, whom they were going to see.

Ver. 15. *And when he was departed thence, he lighted upon Jonadab the son of Rechab, coming to meet him,]* A very pious and prudent Person, as appears by his Precepts to his Son in the xxxvth of *Jeremiah*. Who hearing what *Jebu* had done, came, I suppose, to congratulate with him his Happiness in fulfilling God's Commands; and to encourage him in his Proceedings to destroy Idolatry. *Scaliger* indeed in his *Elench. Tribæres. c. 24.* against *Serrarius*, endeavours to prove that this *Jonadab* was not he that gave those Precepts to his Sons; but another in the Days of *Jeremiah*: For it is not likely, he thinks, that a Man addicted to such a quiet Life as he instituted, would come to meet *Jebu*; and therefore this was some Military Person of great Note, who *Jebu* thought might be serviceable to him. But this is a weak Argument; for why might not *Jonadab*, though he loved Retirement, come to congratulate *Jebu's* Zeal against Idolatry, and *Jebu* be glad of such a Man's Company, whose known Piety would gain him greater Respect than the Attendance of any great Captain could procure him.

And he saluted him,] Some think, that *Jonadab* saluted *Jebu*, and spake the Words following. But it seems plain to me that they are the Words of *Jebu*, who saluted him, as soon as he saw him, and enquired of his Welfare.

And said, Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?] The King professed great Love to him, and asked him if he loved him as sincerely, and approved his Actions, as he did *Jonadab's* Institutions.

And Jonadab answered, It is.] The Expression is double in the Hebrew, *Yes, Yes*, to signify a vehement Affection. Or, as a late Learned Writer (*Gousset* in his *Comment. Hebr. Linguae*) will have it, the former is spoken by *Jonadab*, who said *it is*; and the other by *Jebu*, who answered, *is it?* Then give me thy hand, &c.

If it be, give me thine hand:] In token of Friendship (*Gal. ii. 9.*) and of Fidelity: As it was among the *Romans*, it appears by many Places in *Virgil*: For instance, *Æneid. 3.*

*Ipse pater dextram Anchises, haud multa moratus,
Dat juveni atque animum præsentis pignore firmat.*

And he gave him his hand, and he took him up to him into his chariot.] Which was a great Honour, and a Token of high Esteem, to ride with the King in the same Chariot.

Ver. 16. *And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD:]* To vindicate his Honour, and fulfil his Commands.

So they made him ride in his chariot.] He speaks in the Plural Number (*they made him*) because the Servants, I suppose, opened the Door, and helped him up into the Chariot, when *Jebu* gave him his Hand.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, 'till he had destroyed him,]* Utterly rooted out his Family.

According to the saying of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.] This is mentioned again,

both to shew his Warrant for what he did; and his Exactness in fulfilling God's Command.

Ver. 18. *And Jebu gathered all the people together,]* That is, all the Heads of them, who represented the rest.

And said unto them, Ahab served Baal a little, but Jebu shall serve him much.] His Zeal for the LORD exceeded its Bounds; for he ought not to have taken any indirect Course to fulfil his Will: As he did in counterfeiting as much Zeal for *Baal*, as he professed to *Jonadab* he had for the LORD. God doth not stand in need of any Man's Sin, to compass his Ends: But *Jebu* made bold to dissemble deeply for the Service of God; in which he cannot be excused.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests, let none be wanting:]* By *Servants* he doth not here mean his Worshipers; but being joined with *Prophets* and *Priests*, they signified some that ministered with the *Priests*, in the Worship of *Baal*: Like the *Levites* among the People of God.

For I have a great sacrifice to do to Baal:] He might possibly mean a Sacrifice not of Beasts, but of Men; even of all the Worshipers of *Baal*; but he intended they should understand him otherwise, and therefore these Words were spoken to deceive.

Whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live.] He thought that some, who considered what Slaughter he had made of the Family of *Ahab* (who introduced the Worship of *Baal*, whom he pretended more highly to honour than *Ahab* had done) might suspect his Design; and therefore he terrifies them with the Fear of Death, if they did not come to this great Sacrifice.

But Jebu did it in subtilty, that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.] By destroying his Prophets, and Ministers, and Priests; who being all cut off, his Worship would fall to the Ground. But the next Verses extend this further, to all the Worshipers of *Baal* in the whole Country.

Ver. 20. *And Jebu said, Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.]* The last Day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the great Day of the Feast, is called by this Name of *Atzarah*; which we translate a solemn Assembly: When it was not lawful to do any servile Work, but wholly attend to the Service of God, *Levit. xxiii. 36.* Such a Day he now caused to be sanctified (as the Word is in the Hebrew) for the Service of *Baal*.

Ver. 21. *And Jebu sent through all Israel,]* To give notice of this great Feast; and to require every one, upon pain of Death, to be present at it.

And all the worshippers of Baal came, and there was not a man left, that came not: and they came into the house of Baal; and the house of Baal was full, from one end to another.] If this be meant of the whole Number of *Baalites* throughout the Kingdom, it seems scarce credible that the Temple of *Baal* should be so large as to hold them all. But two Things are to be considered, First, that this House or Temple comprehended all the outward Courts of it (as it did at the Temple of *Jerusalem*) which were very spacious. And Secondly,

Secondly, the Number of his Worshippers was much diminished since the Death of *Abab*: For *Jehoram* his Successor had no great Kindness for the Worship of *Baal* (iii. 2.) and Men are apt to follow the Example of their King. Besides, it is likely, *Hazael* King of Syria had destroyed many of them, in his Wars with *Israel*.

Ver. 22. *And he said to him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments.*] By all the worshippers of *Baal*, are meant all the People that came to worship him: But his Ministers and Priests, who alone wore Vestments of a different kind from the rest of the People; and so it was among the Jews, and all other Nations.

Ver. 23. *And Jehu went, and Jonadab the son of Rechab into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the L O R D, but the worshippers of Baal only.*] He calls those that worshipped the Golden Calves, the *Servants of the L O R D*: Because they worshipped the *L O R D* by them, and abhorred the Worship of *Baal*: Whose Sacrifice he pretended to fear might be profaned, if any Strangers should be present at it. According to the common Saying among the Heathen, *Procul, o procul este profani*.

Ver. 24. *And when they went in to offer sacrifices, and burnt-offerings,*] When they had begun their sacred Offices.

He appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that lets him go, his life shall be for the life of him.] This was but a small Number for such an Execution. But, it is likely, though no more appeared, yet there were others ready at hand to support them, if need were, in the Undertaking. Or rather, these were set at the several Gates of the outward Courts; that if any endeavoured to make their Escape, they might kill them. But the next Verse seems to signify there was a greater Body of Men, that went for that Purpose into the Temple.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass as soon as they had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu said to the guard, and to the captains,*] Of those Troops that he had set to keep the Peace, as he pretended, and prevent all Disturbance.

Go in, and slay them, let none come forth. And they smote them with edge of the sword, and the guard and the captains cast them out,] There is nothing in the Hebrew that answers to the Word *them*: Nor is it likely, that the Captains and Soldiers troubled themselves to cast their Bodies out of the Temple; where they were rather buried in its Ruins. But the Meaning is, having done this Execution, the Guard and Captains rushed out of the Temple in great Haste, and immediately ran to the City of the House of *Baal*, as it here follows.

And went to the city of the house of Baal.] That is, a Place near to *Samaria*, where *Baal* had another Temple; which gave Name to the Place. Or rather there were great Buildings adjoining to the Temple of *Baal* in *Samaria*, where the Prophets, and Priests, and

their Servants lived; called a *City*, because they were so large.

Ver. 26. *And they brought forth the images out of the house of Baal, and burnt them.*] They worshipped several other lesser Gods (whose Images they had in this Temple) together with the Supreme God, whom they called *Baal*; as the others were called *Baalim*. So *Servius* writes upon the first of the *Georgicks*, that *veteri ritu*, according to ancient Custom, after the Priests had invoked the special Gods to whom the Sacrifice was intended, *generaliter omnia Numina invocabantur*, all the Gods were invoked, lest any of them should think themselves neglected.

Ver. 27. *And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal,*] Demolished his Temple, and the Image of *Baal* in it: Which was either the *Sun*, or *Belus*.

And made it a draught-house unto this day.] It was turned into a *Jakes*, as we now speak, a Place where Men went to ease Nature; which was the highest Contempt that could be put upon it.

Ver. 28. *Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.*] So that he was never worshipped more in this Country; but they were perfectly freed from this sort of Idolatry. Which must be acknowledged to have been a very great Work: All the Eastern People, and particularly the *Syrians* and *Zidonians*, and other neighbouring Nations, being addicted to this Worship, and had been so from ancient Time; as what I observed before shews (1 *Kings* xvi. 31.) from the many Cities, Woods, Mountains, and Fountains, which before *Joshua's* Time were known by the Name of *Baal*: And there is mention of *Baal-Shalisha* in this Book, iv. 42.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit, from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and in Dan.*] Which he still worshipped; being afraid, as his Predecessors were, that if he took them away, as he had done *Baal*, the People would return to the House of *David*. For which Reason all the following Kings of *Israel* continued this false Worship 'till their Captivity; when these Calves were carried away with them. So they say in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxii. *In the twentieth Year of Pekah came Tiglath-pileser, and took away the golden Calf that was in Dan, and departed*; which they endeavour to prove out of 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 20, 21. And a little after, *in the twelfth year of Abaz, the L O R D stirred up the spirit of the king of Assyria, and he carried away the golden calf in Beth-el, and departed: fulfilling what is written, Hos. x. 6.*

Ver. 30. *And the L O R D said unto Jehu,*] By some Prophet; either *Elisba*, or the young Man that was sent to anoint *Jehu*; or some other.

Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Abab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.] His partial Obedience was not without its Reward: Which had been greater if he had been as zealous in all things as he was in this one Instance: The following History shews the Truth of this Prediction:

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The Kingdom continuing in his Posterity, 'till the Days of Zechariah, who was the fourth from Jehu (xv. 8.) and reigned only so long, as to make good this Prophecy.

Ver. 31. *But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel, with all his heart: For he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.]* This Admonition from God (which sufficiently shewed he was not well pleased with him) did him no good; but Policy prevailed against Religion, and persuaded him to continue the old Idolatry, when he had destroyed the new.

Ver. 32. *In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel;]* He took several of their Frontier Towns, I suppose, and thereby opened a Way to make great Ravages in their Country. For though Jehu was a valiant Man, yet God did not prosper him, because he was not a sincere Servant of his.

Ver. 33. *From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer (which is by the river Arnon) even Gilead and Basban.]* This fully explains what was said in the foregoing Verse, that God cut them short. For Hazael took all their Country beyond Jordan: The whole Kingdom, which the Israelites took from Sihon and Og. Thus these Countries which the Israelites first conquered, were the first that they lost.

Ver. 34. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* Which was extant in those Days when this was written; and related his History more at large: Of which this is a brief Abridgment.

Ver. 35. *And Jehu slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 36. *And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel, was twenty and eight years.]* Longer than any of the Kings of Israel his Predecessors.

CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. **A**ND when Athaliah the mother of Abaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose, and destroyed all the seed royal.] There was many of them cut off by Jehu, as we read in the foregoing Chapter; and not a few by others, 2 Chron. xxi. 4. xxii. 1. but now their Destruction was compleated by Athaliah. Who, as she was ambitious of Government, so she was enraged to see Abab's Family cut off; and therefore resolved to do as much by the House of David. And perhaps she was afraid Jehu should come and kill her because she was of the House of Abab; and therefore endeavoured to strengthen her self, by getting into the Throne; which she could not compass, without the Destruction of the Royal Family. For she was a wicked woman, as she is elsewhere called; and had played the Harlot with another Man, by whom she had Children; as the Jewish Doctors gather from 2 Chron. xxiv. 7.

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Ver. 2. *But Jehosheba the daughter of king Joram,]* Not by Athaliah, but by another Wife. For Athaliah would not have suffered her Daughter to be married to the High-Priest, nor would he (in all likelihood) have married the Daughter of such a Woman.

Sister of Abaziah,] By the Father's Side.

Took Joash the son of Abaziah, and stole him away from the kings sons that were slain;] Some think that he was thrown among them, and thought to be dead; but she snatched him away, and brought him to Life. Or, as P. Martyr understands it, his Nurse threw him among the slain on purpose to save his Life, and came afterwards and stole him away. But the plain Meaning seems to be, that they being all ordered to be slain, she secretly stole him away and preserved him.

And they hid him,] That is, she and her Husband Jehoiada the High-Priest, to whom she was married, 2 Chron. xxii. 11.

And his nurse in the bed-chamber, from Athaliah, so that he was not slain.] It appears by the next Verse, that this Bed-chamber was in the House of the LORD; that is, the Temple. Which doth not in the Scripture always signify the Sanctuary; but in a larger Sense comprehends all the Courts belonging to it. So Kimchi observes, that *the whole mountain of the house is called the house of the LORD.* And this Chamber here spoken of was in the outward Court of all, called by Josephus *ἡ πρώτη ἱερὴ* the first holy place. For in the inner Court no body lay, nor might any Woman come into it. See l'Empereur upon Codex Middoth, Cap. 2. Sect. 3.

Ver. 3. *And he was with her in the house of the LORD, six years:]* The Ministers of God were so true to Jehoiada, that he lay thus long undiscovered.

And Athaliah did reign over the land.] Not *de Jure* (as the Lawyers spake) but *de Facto*. For if we may believe the Jews, it was not lawful for a Woman to reign over them. So Maimonides in the Treatise *Melachim*, they do not place a woman on the throne, because it is said, Deut. xvii. 15. *If thou wilt set a king over thee, and not a queen.* And so in all the prefectures in Israel, they place none but men. She being therefore an Usurper, it may seem strange she held the Throne so long as six Years, against the Constitution of the Kingdom. But in after Ages there is an Example of one that held it longer. For Alexandra the Widow of Jannæus, after the Death of her Husband, possessed her self of the Throne, and reigned nine Years, as Josephus relates, L. xiii. *Antiq.* Cap. 24. See Schickard in his *Mishpat Hamelech.* Cap. 2. Theorem 3.

Ver. 4. *And the seventh year Jehoiada sent and set]* Jehoiada was not a meer private Man, but a Person of great Authority in the Kingdom, who knowing Athaliah was an Usurper, and that he had the right Heir to the Kingdom in his Possession, (which if he had not, his own Wife had a better Right than Athaliah) thought he had sufficient Warrant to dethrone her, and set up him that had the undoubted Title to the Crown. Which he did when he was seven Years old; because then he grew so big, that he could not well be longer concealed;

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cealed; and it was fit also he should be educated in a Royal manner; which he could not be while he lay hid.

The rulers over hundreds,] The Names of five of them are set down in 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 1. who were all, some think, of the Tribe of *Levi*. For they of that Tribe were the Persons principally employed in this Undertaking, as appears by the Sequel. But we learn from that Place in the *Chronicles*, ver. 2. that whosoever they were, they went about all *Judah*, and gathered not only the *Levites*, but *the chief of the fathers of Israel*.

With the captains of the guard,] The chief Commanders of the Soldiery, and those that had been the former King's Guard: For it is not likely he durst call those who were the Guard of the present Queen.

And brought them to him into the house of the LORD,] Into that Part of it where *Joash* was kept, where *Jehoiada* discoursed with them.

And made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.] He discovered to them the true Heir of the Crown, and they entered into a Covenant to restore him: Which they bound with an Oath of Secrecy.

Ver. 5. *And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye should do;]* These Words and those that follow, are certainly spoken to the Priests, and Levites (with whom those Captains before-mentioned were to join) as Men whom *Jehoiada* had perfectly under his Command, and whom he could trust: To whom he gives the following Orders.

A third part of you that enter in on the sabbath, shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house:] The Priests and Levites took their Turns in their Attendance at the Temple; and their Course was finished in the space of a Week. Every Week a Course went out, and another came in. Now they who now entered upon their Week of Attendance (which was on the Eve of every Sabbath) were divided by *Jehoiada* into three Parts; one of which he here orders to guard the King's House. That is, that Part of the Temple on the North, where he lodged, and was now educated.

Ver. 6. *And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur:]* That is, the East Gate of the Temple, towards the City; which was the principal (and at the first, the only) Entrance into the House of the LORD. This is called *the gate of the foundation*, 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 5. and by five other Names (if we may believe the *Talmudists*) where another Part were ordered to guard it. *Abarbinel* thinks this Eastern Gate was called *Sur*, being as much as to say, *go back*: Because no unclean Person durst enter into this Gate. And the *Gate of the Foundation*, because it was as he speaks, the *Gate of the first Sanctity*.

And a third part at the gate behind the guard:] The other third Part he set at the South Gate, which looketh towards the Royal Palace; and through which *Athaliah* was wont to come, and therefore had a Guard near this Place. Behind which these *Levites* were placed by *Jehoiada*, to observe their Motions.

So shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down.] They were to take spe-

cial Care, that the House of the LORD were not any Way profaned; suffering none to come nearer to it than they ought. And particularly watching those out of the Palace, that they did not defile it. So *de Dieu* thinks the Word *Massach* (which we translate *be not broken down*) ought to be understood, being as much as *be Massach*, by pulling away those that shall dare to pollute the holy Place, and would come in to hurt the King. Or, as other learned Men have interpreted it, they were to keep *the Watch of the House at the Breach*: Which the wicked Sons of *Athaliah* (which she had by another Man) had made, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 7. Dr *Lightfoot* thinks that besides these three Parts for the Design which *Jehoiada* intended, there were three more (six in all) for the ordinary Service of the Temple. For he would not have that neglected, while he took care of the Affairs of the Kingdom. See his Book of the Temple, Chap. xx.

Ver. 7. *And two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath,]* It is well known, that *David* divided the Priests into twenty-four Courses, to attend the Service of the Temple in their Turns: Every one of which Courses ministered their Week from Sabbath to Sabbath. So *Josephus* saith expressly, he ordained each should minister eight Days, ἀπὸ σαββάτου ἐπὶ σαββάτου, *from one Sabbath to another*, Lib. 8. Antiq. Cap. 2. For that Course which went out, did not depart 'till the Sabbath was over; and that which came in, entered when it began; as the Learned Mr *Whiston* in his late *Chronology* expounds the Words of *Josephus*, pag. 156.

Even they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king.] He adds two Parts of those who had finished their Course, and went off, to go home into the Country; whom he would have to stay at *Jerusalem*, and assist the rest before-named; especially in strengthening that Part of the Temple that lay towards the Palace; or rather to be the King's Guard, when he came out of his Lodgings (where he was at present) into the Court of the LORD's House.

Ver. 8. *And ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, he shall be slain:]* By the ranges is to be understood, if not the Ranks of Men, that stood about the Mountain of the House of the LORD, the Ranks of Trees that grew on either Side of the Causeway, or the Rails that were set on either Side of it, for the Stay and Safety of those that passed upon it. See Dr *Lightfoot* in the same Place.

And be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.] When he went out to walk, or do any other thing; and when he returned to his Apartment.

Ver. 9. *And the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, and with those that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.]* To shew they were all disposed according to his Order.

Ver. 10. *And to the captains of the hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields that were in the house of the LORD.]* They did

did not come armed into the Temple, lest they should give any Suspicion; but *Jehoiada* furnished them with such Weapons as the Temple afforded; particularly with the Spears and Shields which King *David* had used, and dedicated after all his Wars, as Monuments of God's Goodness to him; and perhaps several Spears and Shields of great Men, which he had taken as Spoils in his Wars.

Ver. 11. *And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.*] The Guard within the Court mentioned ver. 7. stood from the South Part of the Temple towards the Palace, to the North Part of it, where the King lay hid; about the great Altar of Burnt-offering (which was at the East-gate) and the Sanctuary; and then the King was brought forth, and placed below the Altar, that all might see him.

Ver. 12. *And he brought out the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony, and they made him king, and anointed him.*] Having produced *Joash*, he put the Crown on his Head (which I suppose was kept in the Sanctuary) and then put the Book of the Law into his Hand, according to *Deut. xvii. 18, 19.* which is called the *Testimony*, because God therein testified what he would have the King and them all do. And thereupon he declared him to be King of *Judah*; and then anointed him: Which it was not necessary to do (and therefore he is said to be *made King* before it was done) being the Son of a King; had not *Athaliah* disturbed the Succession, and pretended to the Kingdom. Therefore to settle all things, he was anointed as *Solomon* and *Jehu* were. But there is a Doubt what is meant by *Eduth*, which we translate *Testimony*; supposing it comes from the Root, which signifies to *testify*. But there are those, particularly *Forsterius*, *Avenarius*, and others of greater note, who derive it from the Hebrew Word *Adab*, which signifies to *cloath*, *put on*, and *adorn*; and so take *Eduth* for some Royal Ornament, which was a Mark of Kingly Dignity, and that, it is probable, might be a *Bracelet* which *Jehoiada* put upon the young King, together with the Crown. This Conjecture is countenanced by what we read of the *Amalekite*, who brought the Bracelet on *Saul's* Arm to *David*, as well as the Crown that was on his Head. See *Fortunatus Scacchus Myrothec. iii. Cap. 41.*

And they clapt their hands, and said, God save the king.] The Guards and the People (as the next Verse explains it) testified their Joy, by clapping their Hands and shouting, as they did at King *Solomon's* Coronation, *1 Kings i. 34, 39.* For clapping of hands was a Token of Joy, as appears by many Places, *Psal. xlvii. 1. Isa. lv. 12.*

Ver. 13. *And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guards, and of the people,*] Who were now assembled to see their King.

She came to the people, into the temple of the L O R D.] Into the outward Court where they were met together. And she seems in a great Fright to have come alone, or but few Attendants with her.

V O L. II.

Ver. 14. *And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was,*] Some of the *Jews*, and many great Men among Christian Writers, understand by this Pillar the brazen Scaffold, which *Solomon* erected at the Dedication of the Temple, *2 Chron. vi. 13.* But the plainest Meaning seems to me, that he stood by the Post of the East-gate in the inner Court, where the Station of the King was. Which *Vitrunga* hath made probable (in his *Synagoga Vet. p. 31, &c.*) where he observes, that the King alone entred at the East-gate on the Sabbath, and the new Moons; But on the other Days at the South or North-gate, where the People entred; which he gathers from *Ezek. xlv. 1, 2.* He stood, I suppose, only to be better seen by the People; otherwise sitting was a Posture of Authority.

And the princes, and the trumpeters by the king and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets:] This made her soon apprehend the danger she was in, as it here follows. For the People when they saw their young King expressed their Joy, it is likely, in some such Acclamations as the People of *Rome* made at the Inauguration of *Claudius*, *Claudi Auguste*, *Principem te, aut qualis tu es semper Octavianus, te respublica requirebat, tu Frater, tu Pater, tu Amicus, tu bonus Senator, tu vere Princeps,* as *Trebel. Pollio* relates in his Life. For though *Joash* had done nothing praise-worthy, being but a Child; yet they rejoiced in the Felicity which they promised themselves in his Reign, under the Government of such a Man as *Jehoiada*.

And Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason.] Adding, as *Josephus* relates, Take that Boy and kill him; meaning *Joash*, in whose Behalf this Conspiracy, as she called it, was made against her. But she spake like a distracted Woman, there being no body on her Side, to execute any of her Commands.

Ver. 15. *And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds, and the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her without the ranges;*] Through which they had suffered her to come, being a Queen, contrary to the Order, ver. 8.

And him that followeth her, kill with the sword.] If any body appeared to abet and rescue her, he commanded him to be slain.

For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the L O R D.] From whence they dragged her, 'till they had brought her down to the Bottom of the Causey, and there they slew her.

Ver. 16. *And they laid hands on her, and she went by the way which the horses came into the king's house, and there she was slain.*] That is, saith the same Author (Chap. 5. Sect. 2. of the Temple) they got her out of the Mountain of the House, and brought her down the Causey; and when she came near the Horse-gate, through which the Horses went up out of the Stables of *Millo*, when the King had occasion for them, there they slew her.

By which the horses came into the king's house.] There was another Horse-gate in the main Wall of the City, *Jerem. xxxi. 39.* But that was distinct from this; which was peculiar to the

King's Horses: And therefore a distinctive Character is set upon it, that it was the Horse-gate towards the king's house, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 15. So it should be rendred, rather than *by the king's house*: For neither of these Gates were near his House, but at a Distance from it; and we may call this Gate here spoken of, the back-way to the King's House at the Stable-gate.

Ver. 17. *And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, and the king and the people, that they should be the LORDs people;*] He first takes Care about Religion, and engaged them in a solemn Covenant to root out Idolatry, and to restore the true Worship of God, and continue in it.

Between the king also and the people.] That they should be his obedient Subjects, and he should govern them by the Law. This was directly agreeable to the Apostolick Precept, *Fear God, and honour the King.*

Ver. 18. *And all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces throughly,*] Accordingly they began immediately to make good their Covenant, in destroying the Worship of Baal: Which had been introduced among the People of Judah by Jehoram, viii. 8. and was continued by Ahaziah, ver. 27.

And slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altar:] To which it is possible he fled, as a Place of Refuge; or they dragged him hither to make him a Victim to his God.

And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD.] Levites to keep the Door; lest any one who was unclean should enter into it. See more, 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, 19.

Ver. 19. *And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guards, and the people of the land,*] Brought them out of the Temple, that they might conduct the King to his Palace, as it here follows.

And they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the kings house,] By that Gate of the King's Palace, where a Guard was to be kept for his Safety.

And he sat on the throne of the kings.] Which was the Accomplishment of his Inauguration.

Ver. 20. *And all the people of the land rejoiced,*] Applauding what Jehoiada had done.

And the city was in quiet;] No body appeared in Defence of Athaliah.

And they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the kings house.] Not far from it: The People having so little Kindness for her, that they suffered her to be slain without any Opposition. In the *Chronicles* indeed the Words are, *the city was in quiet after that they had slain Athaliah*, 1 Chron. xxii. 21. Which may import there was some Bustle before, when she was apprehended; but after her Death there was no stir: Nor do we read they were so much concerned for her, as to bury her.

Ver. 21. *Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.*] Being so very young he was very unfit for so weighty a Charge; but he was under the Direction of so excellent a Counsellor, that while Jehoiada lived, all things went well, and the Nation was very happy, as we read in the next Chapter. But that good Man being

dead, he was seduced by some great Men about him to Idolatry, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, &c. Which shews him to have been a weak Prince, who wanted Judgment in things of greatest Moment.

CHAP. XII.

Verse 1. **I**N the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash began to reign; and forty years he reigned in Jerusalem: And his mothers name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.

Ver. 2. *And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days, wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him.*] This History shews of what Advantage it is to have good Instructors and Counsellors about a King. For Jehoiada preserved Joash in good Ways while he lived: But when he was dead, Joash changed his Manners, and was persuaded by the Flatteries of some of his Courtiers to fall into Idolatry; and he killed the Son of this pious Jehoiada, who reprieved him for it, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, 21.

Ver. 3. *But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed, and burnt incense in the high places.*] These private Altars (on which they sacrificed to the true God) I observed before, were not removed by the best of their Kings, 'till the Reign of Hezekiah. And this King was too young, and his Authority too weak (though he had Jehoiada to assist him) to attempt to break such a long continued Custom; especially when some of the Princes in their Hearts were Idolaters.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoash said unto the priests,*] The House of God being suffered to run to Decay, in the Time of Athaliah, and her Son; Joash, in Gratitude to God who had preserved him there resolved to have it repaired; and, in order to it, commanded what Money should be set apart for that Purpose.

All the money of the dedicated things that are brought into the house of the LORD,] That had been, or should hereafter be brought and dedicated to the Service of God, and of the Temple.

Even the money of every one that passeth the account,] This and the following Money he commanded the Priests and Levites to go through the Kingdom, and gather it for the Repair of the Temple, as we are told, 2 Chron. xxiv. 5. They were not to expect 'till the People should bring it in, but go and gather it, every Man of his Acquaintance, where he knew it to be due. And so the foregoing Words are to be translated, not *that is brought*, but *to be brought* into the House of the LORD. Which Money arose three Ways; the first is here mentioned, *the Money of every one that passeth* (for the Words *the account* are not in the Hebrew) which some understand of the Offering which pious People of other Nations made, who came to worship at Jerusalem, 1 Kings viii. 41. Or rather, of those who were come to twenty Years of Age, and being past that, were to pay half a Shekel. This had been much neglected in the Time of Athaliah (as the Jewish Doctors think) but now being carefully gathered, there was enough to maintain the daily Sacrifice (which was supported

ported out of this Money) and to carry on also the Reparation of the Temple. Though *Abarbinel* thinks it was wholly applied to the Reparation; and the People voluntarily offered for the maintaining of the daily Morning and Evening Sacrifice.

The money that every man is set at,] This was the second Way: By the Money that every Man who had vowed himself to God, was to pay, by the Estimation that the Priest should make for his Redemption; according to that Law, *Levit. xxviii. 2, 3.* For so the Words are here in the Hebrew, *the money, of a man whose taxation is the money of his soul.* That is, who is taxed such a Sum of Money, whereby his Soul might be freed from the Vow wherewith he had bound himself. For 'till this Money was paid, his Life was not his own, but God's.

And all the money that cometh into any mans heart to bring into the house of the LORD,] This was the third sort of Money for the Reparation of the Temple; that which any Man would give freely for that Service which they were to receive of them.

Ver. 5. *Let the priest take it to them, every man of his acquaintance, and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.]* This Money, thus collected, he intrusted with the Priests, and commanded them to see it employed to the Use for which it was given.

Ver. 6. *And it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoshaphat, the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.]* They were both dilatory and careless in gathering the Money (2 Chron. xxiv. 5.) and did not bring in what they had gathered to begin the Work. Whereupon the King revoked his former Order, and intrusted other Men (as it here follows) with this Work. Thus are Things seldom done well, that are committed to the Care of many.

Ver. 7. *Then king Jehoshaphat called Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? Now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.]* He ordered two Things; First, that they should gather no more Money of the People; and Secondly, that they should not have the Care of seeing the Temple repaired; but pay what had been gathered into other Hands.

Ver. 8. *And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house.]* They submitted to the King's new Orders, and wholly committed the Business to those whom he thought fit to employ.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoiada the priest took a chest,]* By the King's Order, 2 Chron. xxiv. 8.

And bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side, as one cometh into the house of the LORD:] On the right Side of the Gate that went into the Court of the Priests: Not far from the Altar which was within the Court, appears from 2 Chron. xxiv. 8. Dr *Lightfoot* thinks these two Texts do not relate to the same Time. For at the first the Chest was set in the very Court of the Priests near to the Altar, as it is here said in this Place:

So that the Money still passed through the Priest's Fingers; who took it of the People and put it into the Chest which was in their Court, where the People could not come at it. But the Money not coming in so fast as was expected this Way; he removed the Chest, or made another, and set it without the Court, at the Entrance of it, where every one might have Access unto it. And he proclaimed through all the Country they should bring in their Money thither: Which came in so plentifully, that there was enough for the Repair of the House, and for other Uses also.

And the priests that kept the door, put therein all the money brought into the house of the LORD.] There was a Proclamation made, that all the People should bring in their half Shekel, which *Moses* commanded every one of such an Age to pay: And they brought it to the Priests who stood at the Door, that let into their Court, and saw them put it into the Chest, 2 Chron. xxiv. 9.

Ver. 10. *And it was so, when they saw there was much money in the chest, that the kings scribe, and the high priest came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that that was found in the house of the LORD.]* The High-Priest would have a Witness of his Actions, lest he should be suspected of any Fraud, as perhaps others had been; and would not open the Chest without the Assistance of the King's Secretary of State; nor would he open it in the Temple, but had it brought by the Levites into the King's Office; and there the Secretary and the high Priest, or any Officer of his, emptied the Chest, and told the Money, and then put it up in Bags which it is likely they sealed; and then they sent the Chest into its Place again. This they did every Day, as we read 2 Chron. xxiv. 11.

Ver. 11. *And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, and had the oversight of the house of the LORD:]* These Bags of Money were delivered (by the King and *Jehoiada*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 12.) not to the Priests, whom the King had found tardy, and perhaps faulty in converting the Money to their own Uses; but to some select Persons who had this peculiar Business committed to them, to see the Reparation, and to employ good Workmen, and to pay them their Wages.

And they laid it out to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the house of the LORD,] To buy Materials for the Work, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 12. *And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber, and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it.]* For all other Things, of what kind soever they were, which they found necessary for the Reparation.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, there were not made for the house of the LORD, bowls of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD.]* Though these were wanting, yet the Money was limited to the Reparations of the House; and the King ordered that no Vessel of any sort should be bought for the Temple, 'till the Temple itself was put into a good Condition. So the LXX render it, *there shall none be made for*

the house any vessels, &c. (that is, he commanded there should be none made) but all given to the fore-named Workmen, as long as there needed any Reparations. So it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 14. *But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD.]* The Masons and Carpenters, and such like Workmen, had all the Money, to be laid out according to their Discretion, upon the Reparation of the Temple alone, 'till the Work was finished. And then they gave an Account of what Money remained in their Hands, and that was laid out to purchase such Vessels as are before mentioned, for the Service of the Temple, 2 Chron. xxiv. 14.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, they reckoned not with the men, into whose hands they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully.]* They were so confident of the Honesty of the Overseers, that they took no Account of the Money they had paid the Workmen; who were also Men of such clear Reputation, that what they laid out was not questioned. This was a rare Example of Fidelity in managing the publick Money; and there was one Man in Greece, *Aristides*, who was so trusty in the Opinion of all the People.

Ver. 16. *The trespass-money and the sin-money was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests.]* This Money was not applied to the foresaid Use; but put into the Hands of the Priests, that Sacrifices for Trespasses and Sins might be offered for those that gave it.

Ver. 17. *Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it:]* This was a City of the *Philistines*, but taken by King *David*, and added to the Dominions of *Israel* (1 Chron. xviii. 1. 2 Sam. viii. 1.) and now taken from them by *Hazael*.

And Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem.] Having made himself Master of this Place, he plainly declared, by the Disposition of his Affairs, that he intended to make an Attempt upon *Jerusalem*. This fell out after *Jeboash* had forsaken God, and fallen to Idolatry; as appears by the Book of the *Chronicles*: Where a much different Relation is made of the Expedition of the *Syrians*. Inasmuch that *Abarbinel* thinks (which is approved by several Christian Writers) there were two Expeditions. In the first of which *Hazael* came up in Person against them, as is here related; but they purchased Peace of him. And then in the End of the Year, after they had killed *Zechariah*, the War was renewed; though *Hazael* did not come himself, but sent a small Army, which they were not able to oppose, which destroyed a great many of the People, and sent great Spoils to *Damascus*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 25.

Ver. 18. *And Jeboash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Abaziah, his father, kings of Judah had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the kings house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria, and he went away from Jerusalem.]* The Preservation of his Kingdom he thought warranted this; but he had brought these Dangers upon himself, by his Apostacy from God.

Ver. 19. *And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 20. *And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.]* The *Syrians* had left him labouring under great Diseases at this Place, called *Millo*: Where his Servants slew him in his Bed, as we read 2 Chron. xxiv. 25. There was another Place called *Millo*, hard by the King's Palace at *Jerusalem*: Therefore to distinguish this from that, this is called *Millo that goeth down to Silla*; as *Abarbinel* thinks.

Ver. 21. *For Jozabab the son of Shimeath,]* He was called by another Name also, viz. *Zabad*.

And Jehoabab the son of Shomer,] This was his Father's Name, it is likely, and his Mother was called *Shimrith*, who was a *Moabite*; as *Shimeath* was an *Ammonite*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 26.

His servants, smote him and he died;] They were Friends of *Jehoiada* (as *Josephus* thinks) who took this Revenge upon *Joash*, for the Death of *Zechariah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, as is expressly noted, 2 Chron. xxiv. 25.

And they buried him with his fathers in the city of David,] But not in the Sepulchre of the Kings, 2 Chron. xxiv. 25. For though they did him so much Honour as to bury him in the Royal City; yet not all the Honour that was usual; because he had forsaken God, and slain one of his Prophets.

And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.] His Servants did not kill him, with an Intention to usurp the Kingdom; but only to revenge the Blood of *Zechariah*. For they suffered his Son to succeed *Joash* peaceably, who slew those that had slain his Father, 2 Chron. xxv. 3.

C H A P. XIII.

Verse 1. **I**N the three and twentieth year of *Joash* the son of *Abaziah* king of *Judah*, *Jehoabaz* the son of *Jebu* began to reign over *Israel* in *Samaria*, and reigned seventeen years.] Some have raised a Doubt about this Account, because *Joash* began to reign in the seventh Year of *Jebu* (xii. 2.) who reigned but twenty-eight Years (x. 36.) from whence if seven Years be deducted, there remains no more than one and twenty, not three and twenty Years; as is here said. To which *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* answer; there were two incomplete Years; for when it is said *Joash* reigned in the seventh Year of *Jebu*, it must be understood of the Beginning of his seventh Year; and in like manner, when he speaks here of the three and twentieth Year of *Joash*, it must be understood of the Beginning of the same Year. And so they are called three and twenty, when they were but one and twenty perfect Years; but it is better to say (as my worthy Friend Dr *Alix* thinks) that there was an *Interregnum* of a Year between the Death of *Jebu* and the first of *Jehoabaz*.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jehoabam, who made Israel to sin, he departed not there-*

therefrom.] Was not reclaimed by the severe Punishments God inflicted on him.

Ver. 5. *And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and Ben-badad the son of Hazael, all their days.*] The Word *their*, is not in the Hebrew; so that it may be translated all his Days, as it is explained ver. 22.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoabaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him :*] Not for his sake, but for the sake of the pious Ancestors of this People; with whom he had made a Covenant of great Mercy to be shewed to their Posterity; which in their great Distress he now afforded them. See ver. 23.

For he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.] Intending their utter Ruin, which God would not yet permit; but bear longer with them.

Ver. 5. *(And God gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians :)* Some understand by this Saviour, an extraordinary Captain, whom God raised up to fight their Battles, with great Success. But it being said, that while Hazael lived he oppressed them, ver. 22. it is more reasonable to understand by this Saviour, the Son of Jehoabaz: Who, when Hazael was dead, delivered them from their Bondage, ver. 25. And perhaps he did this in his Father's Life-time; who made him joint Sovereign with himself.

And the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as aforetime.] They lived quietly and securely, not only in their fortified Towns, but in the Villages and the Fields.

Ver. 6. *Nevertheless, they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, but walked therein :*] Neither their Miseries, nor God's Mercies to them, made any Alteration in them; but they continued in those Sins; which had ruined the House of Jeroboam, and many of his Successors.

And there remained the grove also in Samaria.)] We read of a Grove which Abab planted in Honour of Baal, 1 Kings xvi. 33. But his Worship being utterly destroyed by Jehu, I cannot but think that he cut down that Grove. And therefore the Grove here mentioned had in it the Image of some other God.

Ver. 7. *Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoabaz, but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots,*] With the Men belonging to them.

And ten thousand footmen ;] This explains what he means by *the People* in the foregoing Words; not all the People of Israel, but the Soldiers, or Men of War; of which there were no more left, than this small Number.

For the king of Syria had destroyed them,] God left them in his Hand, to make this Destruction among them, killing some, and carrying others captive.

And had made them like the dust by threshing.] By perpetual Wars and Captivities; which made very great Depopulations.

Ver. 8. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoabaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel ?*] The Judgments of God upon him were the most remarkable, because he was a Man of might: And was so far from being able

to stand before the Syrians, that they beat him to Dust.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoabaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Joash his son reigned in his stead.*] Called in the next Verse Jehoash.

Ver. 10. *In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, began Jehoash the son of Jehoabaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and he reigned sixteen years.*] A Difficulty seems to arise, by comparing this Verse with the first: Where it is said, Jehoabaz King of Israel began to reign in the twenty-third Year of Joash King of Judah, and reigned seventeen Years: From whence it follows, that Jehoash began to reign not in the thirty-seventh, but in the thirty-ninth, or fortieth Year of Joash King of Judah. But this only shews the Truth of what I said upon ver. 5. that he reigned with his Father three Years: After God was so gracious as to raise up a Deliverer to them; who was this Son of his, by whom Peace was restored to them. This we note in the Margin, he reigned in Consort with his Father, xiv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: but he walked therein.*

Ver. 12. *And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel ?*] They were all recorded in the Book so often mentioned (See 1 Kings xi. 41.) and his Fight with Amaziah is particularly related, and set down at large in 2 Chron. xxv. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 13. *And Joash slept with his fathers, and Jeroboam sat upon his throne :*] From whence some of the Jewish Doctors gather, that he reigned with his Father, at least one Year; though Abarbinel denies it, but without Reason.

And Joash was buried with his fathers in Samaria, with the kings of Israel.] He doth not here conclude this History of Joash; for he afterwards relates great things done by him. But being to speak of the Death of Elisba, upon which those things depended, he interposes that, before he proceeds further to relate his Acts.

Ver. 14. *Now Elisba was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died,*] This was in the tenth Year of Joash, as they say in Seder Olam Rabba, Cap. 19. And from thence gather how long Elisba continued a Prophet in Israel, viz. from the nineteenth Year of Jehoashaphat 'till this Time; which was sixty-five Years.

And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face,] This was no Sign of his hearty Affection to him (for he would not hearken to his Word) but he bewailed himself, and his People, who were in Danger shortly to lose so great a Defender.

And said, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.] They are the Words of Elisba concerning Elijah, when he was taken up to Heaven (ii. 12.) signifying the great Authority he had maintained among them (which is included in the Word Father) and that by his Counsel and Prayers they had obtained Glorious Victories over their Enemies.

Ver. 15.

Ver. 15. *And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows : and he took unto him bow and arrows.]* This was to represent the Wars he was to have with the Syrians.

Ver. 16. *And he said to the king of Israel, Put thy hand upon the bow : and he put his hand upon it : and Elisha put his hands upon the kings hands.]* This was to represent that they were not to trust in their Arms, and their Valour ; but in God alone, who would give them the Victory.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Open the window eastward. And they opened it.]* Part of Syria lay East or North-East from Judæa : And the Syrians also had possessed themselves of all the Land of Israel eastward (x. 33.) from whence he signified, by what follows, Joash should expel them.

Then Elisha said, Shoot : and he shot. And he said, the arrow of the L O R D s deliverance, the arrow of deliverance from Syria :] A Sign the LORD would wound the Syrians by the Arms of the Israelites, and give them a glorious Deliverance from their Tyranny.

For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek,] In the Territories belonging to it, of which see 1 Sam. iv. 1. xxix. 1. The Syrians had taken Gath ; and Aphek, I take it, was not far from it ; so that it was as much as to say, they should drive them out of the Country ; as it follows.

'Till thou hast destroyed them.] Not all the People of Syria, but all their Forces wherewith they infested Israel.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Take the arrows : and he took them : and he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground : and he smote thrice, and stayed.]* That which he represented before by the shooting of an Arrow, he represents again by smiting upon the Ground with the Arrows, viz. Victory over the Syrians, whom he should overthrow and cast down to the Ground in Battle.

Ver. 19. *And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then shouldest thou have smitten Syria 'till thou hadst consumed them : whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.]* By the former Sign the King of Israel might have understood, that this was intended to signify the same thing ; and I suppose the Prophet spake so, as to give him to understand he would have him smite a good many times. And he was angry at his Sloth and Unbelief, which made him stop at the third Stroke ; for if he had done it oftner, he should have utterly disabled them. He had before represented great Victories which he should obtain ; but not 'till now, how often he should overcome ; which he was admonished by God to let him know by this Sign. And it is probable, the Prophet himself did not know, 'till he saw how often he smote on the Ground.

Ver. 20. *And Elisha died, and they buried him : and the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.]* Which was the usual Time when People went out to War, as I have shewn upon 2 Sam. xi. 1. See there ; but whether it was the next Spring after his Death, or some Years after, is doubted. But the Words seem plainly to import it was the next Spring.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass as they were burying a man,]* Carrying him to his Grave.

They spied a band of men,] A Part of the Moabites, who were coming towards the Place where they were to lay the Corps.

And they cast him into the sepulchre of Elisha :] Which being near to the Place where they then were, they rolled away the Stone, and laid the Body by Elisha's ; for fear, if they proceeded to the Sepulchre prepared for this Man, they should fall into the Hand of the Moabites.

And when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha,] From hence some conclude, that this Invasion of the Moabites was some Years after Elisha's Death ; when his Flesh was consumed, and only his Bones remained.

That he revived, and stood upon his feet.] By which Miracle God did the highest Honour to his Prophet, and confirmed both the Truth of what he had promised the King, and the Belief of a future Life. For this was something more than he had done in Elisha's Life-time, when he could not without many Prayers, and stretching himself with great Application, upon the Body of the Child, raise it to Life again ; whereas now upon touching of his dead Body only, God restored a Man, in an Instant, to perfect Health ; for he stood upon his Feet, and, it is likely, walked home with those that brought him to be buried. It is a poor Conceit of Abarbinel and others, that he was a wicked Man, whom God rather would raise to Life again, than suffer his dead Body to rest by such an holy Person as Elisha. It had been enough, if this had been the Reason, to have thrown this dead Body out of Elisha's Sepulchre, and let it lie upon the Ground.

Ver. 22. *But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.]* None of these things which Elisha promised, were accomplished while Hazael lived ; but after his Death Joash the Son of Jehoahaz (as it here follows) vanquished Ben-hadad the Son of Hazael.

Ver. 23. *And the L O R D was gracious unto them, and had compassion upon them, and respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.]* For whose sake he spared them, and would not let the Oppression of the Syrians continue so long, as to ruin them.

And would not destroy them, neither cast them out of his presence as yet.] But allowed them a longer Space for Repentance.

Ver. 24. *So Hazael king of Syria died, and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.]* The Name of Ben-hadad had for a long Time been common to the Kings of Syria ; and now was renewed in another Family.

Ver. 25. *Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war :]* He took all the Country on the other Side of Jordan in the Days of Jebu, x. 33. Besides which he made further Conquests on this side Jordan, in the Day of Jehoahaz : Whether Jehoash recovered all, is not certain ; but what his Father lost, it is here said he regained.

Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.] It is not recorded where these three Battles were fought, but the Success of them was so great, that he retook all that his Father had lost.

C H A P. XIV.

Verse 1. **I**N the second year of Joash the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, reigned Amaziab the son of Joash king of Judah.] This was, as Dr Lightfoot observes, the thirty-eighth Year of his Father Joash King of Judah: Three Years current before his Death. For his Father had thrown himself into such a miserable Condition, by his Apostacy, and his Murder of Zachariah (xii. 17, 18.) that he was become unfit to manage the Kingdom. See *Harm. of the Evang. Proleg. Cap. 6.*

Ver. 2. He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.] Joash King of Israel reigned sixteen Years (xiii. 10.) therefore Amaziab reigned fourteen Years while he lived; and after his Death fifteen Years; which make twenty-nine. See *ver. 17.*

Ver. 3. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: He did in all things according as Joash his father did.] For both of them in the Beginning of their Reigns did very well: But both in their latter End fell into Idolatry. Both of them also, as Abarbinel observes, contemned God's Prophets, who spake to them in the Name of the LORD.

Ver. 4. Howbeit, the high places were not taken away; for yet the people did sacrifice, and burn incense on the high places.] Even in the best Part of his Reign, before he fell to Idolatry, this Licence continued; which had been long practised, against the Law of God. In this he imitated his Father, xii. 3.

Ver. 5. And it came to pass when the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants which had slain the king his father.] He durst not venture upon this Piece of Justice presently, 'till he was well settled in his Authority, and had divested those of all Power, who were the Friends of those Murderers. Who seem to have continued still at Court; for they are called *his servants*.

Ver. 6. But the children of the murderers slew he not: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.] In this he acted like a good Man, and was not moved to cut off the Children, contrary to Law, for fear they should make a Faction against him, and take Revenge for their Fathers Death.

Ver. 7. He slew of Edom.] He alone, and the Men of Judah, made the following Slaughter: Having, at the Command of a Prophet, abandoned the Help of the Israelites; though he had purchased it with a great Sum of Money, 2 Chron. xxv. 7, 8, 9, 10. The Edomites had revolted from Judah in the Days of Joram, viii. 10. and now Amaziab endeavours to reduce them.

In the valley of salt,] A Place mentioned 2 Sam. viii. 13. whence see what I have observed concerning the Reason of this Name.

V O L. II.

Ten thousand,] And he took as many Captives. See 2 Chron. xxv. 12.

And he took Selah by war,] The Metropolis of Arabia Petraea; which took its Name from hence: For Selah is the same with the Word Petra, a Rock; upon which the City stood. From this Rock he seems to have thrown down the ten thousand, whom he took alive, and broke in Pieces, as is said in the fore-named Place, 2 Chron. xxv. 12. Hagar signifies the same, as Bochartus observes, by which Name the Arabians call it, from the Rocky Mountain which hanged over this Place, which St Paul calls by the Arabick Name Hagar.

And called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.] Which Name imports, Obedience of God, or to God. Because, having taken it, he settled, as some imagine, the Laws and Statutes of Moses in this Place; or rather, he acknowledged, by giving it this Name, that the Possession of this Place was a Reward of his Obedience to the Man of God, who required him to dismiss all the Forces he had hired of the Israelites, 2 Chron. xxv. 10.

Ver. 8. Then Amaziab king of Judah sent a messenger to Jehoash, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face.] Being flushed with his great Victory over the Edomites, and incensed by the Damages the Israelites had done him (2 Chron. xxv. 13.) he sent this Challenge to the King of Israel, saying, Let us set our Armies in Battle-array one against the other, and try our Strength. Which some think he did only to try their Military Skill and Prowess; not to revenge Injuries, or get his own again. Which if he had intended, he would have assaulted the Israelites on a sudden; and not given them such fair Warning to stand upon their Defence. But it is more probable, that being encouraged, as I said, by his late Victory, he resolved to be revenged for the Slaughter of his Ancestors by Jehu (Chap. ix.) and for the late Spoil the Israelites had made in his Country (2 Chron. xxv. 10, 13.) but he resolved to have Satisfaction, in a fair and honourable Way, and not by Surprise. And the Words may be thus understood; *Either give me satisfaction, or let us try it out in a battle.* It is probable also, he might think of conquering the Kingdom of Israel, if he did not satisfy him, and bring it back to the House of David: For so Jehoash understood him, as Josephus thinks, and the Sequel shews.

Ver. 9. And Jehoash king of Israel sent to Amaziab king of Judah, saying, the thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon,] He compares himself to a Cedar, and Amaziab to a Thistle; which is a poor Shrub, not worthy of that Name; but having drawn Blood on some poor Traveller, and sorely afflicted him (as Amaziab had done the Edomites) grew very proud, and would be no longer one of the Shrubs, but equal to the most goodly Trees.

Saying, Give me thy daughter to my son to wife:] Make an Affinity with me, and let us be one Kingdom. So some understand it, that Jehoash thought he would have him join his great Kingdom, which was ten Tribes, unto his poor one of two Tribes; that being united, there should be but one King over them all; and they should

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try

try their Fortune in a pitched Battle, which of them two should be the King. But this seems to be too much strained. He only intimates, that if he should desire a friendly Alliance with him, he despised it as below him, as much as a Thistle is below a Cedar.

And there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle.] This represents how easily his Soldiers (who are compared to wild Beasts) would repress his Insolence.

Ver. 10. *Thou hast indeed smitten the Edomites, and thine heart hath lifted thee up:]* This hath made thee proud.

Glory in this, and tarry at home:] Be content with the Honour thou hast won, and be quiet.

For why shouldst thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?] He admonishes him to desist from this needless Provocation of his Neighbours; which might end in his Ruin.

Ver. 11. *But Amaziah would not hearken: Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up, and he, and Amaziah looked one another in the face,]* Encountred one another in a Fight.

At Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.] See 1 Sam. vi. 12.

Ver. 12. *And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to their tents.]* So their Houses were called, from their having no other Habitations for a long Time in the Wilderness; and in Canaan many continued in such Dwellings. Josephus saith, the People of Judah did not strike a Stroke; but being possessed with a panick Fear, when they saw a formidable Army set in Battle-array against them, ran away.

Ver. 13. *And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Abaziah, at Beth-shemesh,]* I suppose his Ancestors are mentioned, to shew, that this was the greater Disgrace to him; being descended from a Race of Kings, which Jehoash was not.

And came to Jerusalem,] Bringing Amaziah with him; and letting the Inhabitants know (as Josephus saith) that he would slay him before their Eyes, if they did not immediately open their Gates unto him; which was accordingly done.

And broke down the wall of Jerusalem, from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.] That the City might lie open to his Invasion, if they should break the Conditions he imposed upon them.

Ver. 14. *And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the L O R D, and in the treasures of the kings house, and hostages,]* The Sons, I suppose, of the principal Persons of the City; for a Security that they would be quiet, and give him no Disturbance.

And returned to Samaria.] For he had enough to do to defend himself from the Syrians; and therefore did not intend a Conquest of the Kingdom of Judah, nor set a Garrison in Jerusalem: But contented himself with the Spoil of it; and perhaps made them Tributaries to him. This was an heavy Punishment upon Amaziah, for going after other Gods, 2 Chron. xxv. 20.

Ver. 15. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?]* There were many other Things which happened in this War, as Abarbinel observes, besides these here compendiously related; for which he refers to a Record which was very well known in those Days; but now is lost.

Ver. 16. *And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 17. *And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah, lived after the death of Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, fifteen years.]* But in no great Credit with his People; for Rasbi thinks he lived most of his Time in Lachish, whither he was forced to fly (as it follows) by reason of a Conspiracy against him in Jerusalem.

Ver. 18. *And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* He mentions nothing of his Might which he shewed; being a weak Prince, who lost the Reputation of his Country.

Ver. 19. *Now they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem:]* Their City having been exposed to Reproach by the great Breach made in their Wall, and spoiled of its best Ornaments, and some of their Children carried away as Hostages for their good Behaviour, he became very odious to the great Men of the City; all this being brought upon them by his Pride and Rashness, and Apostacy from God, 2 Chron. xxv. 27.

And he fled to Lachish,] The Conspiracy it seems grew so strong, that he could not resist it; but was forced to seek for Safety by Flight, in a fortified City upon the Borders of the Philistines.

And they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.] They sent to have him privately murdered (as Josephus reports it) which some undertook and effected.

Ver. 20. *And they brought him on horses;]* In a Chariot.

And they buried him in Jerusalem with his fathers, in the city David.] They did him some Honour when he was dead, though they hated him when he was alive.

Ver. 21. *And all the people of Judah took Azariah]* Called Uzziab in the next Chapter, ver. 30. and in 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. Both signify the same Thing; one being as much as *the help of God*, the other *the strength of God*.

(Which was sixteen years old) and made him king instead of his father Amaziah.] But this was twelve Years after Amaziah's Death: For he was made King in the twenty-seventh Year of Jeroboam (See upon xv. 1.) who began to reign in the fiftieth of Amaziah, ver. 23.

Ver. 22. *He built Elath,]* Repaired it.

And restored it to Judah,] It was a City belonging to Edom, Deut. ii. 8. 2 Chron. viii. 17. which King David, I suppose, took when he conquered this Country; but in the Days of Joash the Edomites revolted, and recovered Elath.

After that the king slept with his fathers.] It is a probable Opinion of Abarbinel, that the King

King his Father, after the great Slaughter of the *Edomites* mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, took this Place; but did not annex it to the Kingdom of *Judah*, by reason of his succeeding Troubles. Which *Azariah* did, by building a Wall about it, and fortifying it; whereby he secured the Possession of it.

Ver. 23. *In the fifteenth year of Amaziab king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years.*] Which was much longer than any of the Kings of *Israel*: *Jebu* himself, the first of his Family, reigning but twenty-eight Years, which was longer than any before him, as I observed, x. 36.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*] As he had the Name, so he trod in the steps of him, who first corrupted *Israel* with Idolatry.

Ver. 25. *He restored the coast of Israel from the entring of Hamath, to the sea of the plain,*] As *Joash* his Father had restored many Cities which *Ben-hadad* had taken; so *Jeroboam* restored a large Territory, which other Kings had taken from them, viz. all the Country from *Libanus* on the North, to the Lake *Asphaltites* on the South.

According to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher.] The Prophet *Jonah* encouraged them to this War, promising them Success in it. Whose Words are not here set down; but this Place shews, that God was very merciful to them, though a very wicked People, still in continuing Prophets among them, when *Elisha* was dead. And this Prophet, the *Jews* fancy, was the Son of the Woman of *Sarepta*, whom *Elijah* raised from the dead. For which I cannot find they have any Ground, but this poor Conceit, that he is called the Son of *Amittai*, i. e. of Truth, say they: Because his Mother said to the Prophet when he restored her Son to her, now I know the word of God in thy mouth is truth, 1 Kings xvii. 24. But this is fully confuted from this single Observation that he is said to be of *Gath-hepher*, which was far from *Sarepta*, towards *Tiberias* in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, as *St Hierom* tells us.

Ver. 26. *For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter:]* He shewed them this Favour, not for any Goodness that was in them; but in Compassion to their Misery, which was greater than could be expressed.

For there was not any shut up, nor any left,] Men of all sorts were destroyed: Or, as some interpret it, they had lost all they had in their Houses, and all that was in the Field. But see of this Phrase, 1 Kings xiv. 10. xxi. 21.

Nor any helper for Israel.] None to relieve, much less to deliver them.

Ver. 27. *And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.]* But since the LORD had not yet decreed to root them out of their own Land; therefore he saved them, even by this wicked Prince, for the present, from their

Enemies; who would otherwise have made an utter End of them.

Ver. 28. *Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Israel, &c.]* Or rather by *Israel*, as *Abarbinel* expounds it; by the Hand or Power of *Israel* they were restored. For when *David* fought against the *Syrians*, and brought them in Subjection to him, he put Garrisons into *Damascus* and *Hamath*, 2 Sam. viii. 6, &c. Which the *Syrians* afterward recovered when they rebelled against *Judah*: But *Jeroboam* possessed himself of them again, and by his Valour made them as subject to *Israel* as they had been to *Judah*.

Ver. 29. *And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and Zachariah his son reigned in his stead.]* He was the third King of *Israel* of *Jebu's* Race, and so might be said to sleep with his Fathers of *Israel*.

CHAP. XV.

Verse 1. **I**N the twenty-seventh year of *Jeroboam* king of *Israel*, began *Azariah* son of *Amaziab* king of *Judah* to reign.] Here is a great Difficulty, in the solving of which Interpreters much vary: For *Amaziab* the Father of *Azariah* lived but fifteen Years after the Beginning of *Jeroboam's* Reign, xiv. 17. Therefore *Azariah* began his Reign, not in the twenty-seventh, but in the Beginning of the seventeenth of *Jeroboam*. Some think *Jeroboam* reigned with his Father eleven Years: Others, that there was an *Interregnum*; that is, the Throne was vacant eleven or rather twelve Years, between the Death of *Amaziab*, and the Inauguration of *Azariah*. Dr *Lightfoot* makes no Doubt of the Truth of this: That *Azariah* being but sixteen Years old in the seven and twentieth of *Jeroboam*, he was but four Years old at his Father's Death; and the Throne being empty for eleven or twelve Years, the Government was managed by some of the Grandees in his Minority. But *Rabag* will have these twenty-seven Years of *Jeroboam* not to be those which were past, but those which were to come; and the Meaning is, *Azariah* was made king when *Jeroboam* had yet twenty-seven Years to reign; before the Family of *Jebu* came to an end. For after this *Jeroboam* reigned twenty-six Years, and his Son six Months; which make twenty-seven imperfect Years. This *Abarbinel* thinks is the literal Sense: But the other is more agreeable to the constant Account of the Reigns of other Kings. See Mr *Whiston* in his late View of the Chronology of the Old-Testament, pag. 91.

Ver. 2. *Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem, and his mothers name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem.]* In which Time, which was longer than any King of *Judah* or *Israel* reigned, he did many great Things; which are recorded in 2 Chron. xxvi. from ver. 5, to 16.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Amaziab his father had done:]* He governed well in the former Part of his Reign, and was prospered

by God (2 Chron. xxvi. 5.) but offended in the latter End of it, as *Amaziah* his Father had done.

Ver. 4. *Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed, and offered incense still in the high places.]* Which was a common Error (as I have often observed) which continued through the Reign of the best of their Kings, 'till the Time of *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 5. *And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper to the day of his death, and he dwelt in a several house:]* The Cause of this Stroke is related at large in 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c. And by a *several house* the Jews understand an House in the Country, which was *Domus libera*: Where he might have Liberty to take his Pleasure, but not to meddle with publick Affairs.

And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.] Over the king's house, as it is in 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. That is, he lived in the Palace, and managed all the Affairs of the Court, and of the Kingdom. This was in the seven and twentieth Year of *Azariah*, when he was smote with the Leprosy (as *Rasi* makes Account) and he continued a Leper twenty-five Years, during which Time *Jotham* took upon him the Administration of the Government, his Father being incapable of it.

Ver. 6. *And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 7. *And Azariah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.]* He was not buried in the very City of David but in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings, 2 Chron. xxvi. 23. In which Field, it is probable, the Sepulchre of the Kings was: Wherein they would not bury *Azariah*, because he was a Leper; but yet very near to the Sepulchre, where his Ancestors lay interred.

Ver. 8. *In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months.]* Some are confident the Throne was vacant two and twenty Years between the Death of *Jeroboam* and the Inauguration of his Son; either through Wars from abroad (which *Jeroboam* might have provoked against his House, by the Conquest of *Hamath* and *Damascus*) or through War at Home, which appears, they think, from this disastrous End of *Zachariah*, ver. 10. See Dr *Lightfoot* in his *Prologomena* to his *Harmony of the Evangelists*, Sect. 6. But there are few that follow this Opinion, though one most learned in these, as well as other things, (Dr *Alix*) thinks there was an *Interregnum* of twenty-four Years. If there be any Difficulty in this Account, most think it is sufficiently solved, by saying, that it was the thirty-eighth Year, from the Time that *Azariah* began to reign with his Father.

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.]* Therefore God cut him off speedily; the Time approaching, when he intended to put an End to the Kingdom of Israel.

Ver. 10. *And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the peo-*

ple, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.] It is uncertain who this *Shallum* was, or what was the Pretence of his Conspiracy, and of his possessing himself of the Throne; but it is pretty plain, I think, that he laid his Treason privately and secret (ver. 15.) and then made an open Assault upon the King's Person in the Face of all the People.

Ver. 11. *And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.]* We read of nothing that he did; therefore the Meaning is, that his Behaviour in the six Months Time wherein he reigned, how he managed Things, and provoked this Conspiracy, are recorded elsewhere: The Author of this Book intending only to give a brief Account of the remaining Kings of Israel.

Ver. 12. *This was the word of the LORD which he spake to Jehu, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel, unto the fourth generation. And so it came to pass.]* How unfaithful soever they proved to God, he faithfully kept his Promise which he made to *Jehu*: Whose Sons *Jehoabaz*, *Jehoash*, *Jeroboam*, and *Zachariah*, succeeded him in the Throne of Israel. But this *Shallum* put an End to that Family, and fulfilled the Prophecy of *Hosea*, i. 4. *I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.]* For though *Jehu* had a Command from God to destroy the House of *Abab*, yet he did it with such ill Affections, and for such wrong Ends, that God avenged that Blood by this Man, who slew *Zachariah*, and the rest of his Posterity, if there were any. At least, he made the Kingdom to cease in this Family, and not long after in all Israel; who were rooted out, and never restored to their Country, as *Judah* was.

Ver. 13. *Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziab king of Judah, and he reigned a full month in Samaria.]* We are not told how he reigned, but it is likely he followed the Steps of *Jeroboam*, who made Israel to sin.

Ver. 14. *For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.]* *Josephus* thinks *Menahem* was General of the Army of Israel, which besieged *Tirzah* when *Zachariah* was slain. And he hearing what *Shallum* had done, came and served him in his kind, and made himself King.

Ver. 15. *And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and the conspiracy which he made, behold they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.]* A larger account was given of his Conspiracy, and the Occasion of it, and his Success in it, in that Book; where some other memorable Acts, which it seems he did in a Month's Time, were recorded.

Ver. 16. *Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and the coasts thereof from Tirzan: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it,]* Some take this *Tiphshah* to be the same with that mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 24. But they lay upon the River *Euphrates*, whereas this was near to *Tirzah*; which was once the Royal City of Israel: To the

the Siege of which, *Josephus* thinks *Menabem* returned after the Slaughter of *Shallum*: Not as General of the Host, but as their King. But they knowing he had no Title to the Kingdom, would not open their Gates to him. Therefore he took it by Force, and spoiled it, and all the Territory about it, 'till he came to *Tiphshah*, which he used more cruelly.

And all the women therein that were with child, he ript up.] By which Barbarity he thought to terrify the whole Kingdom, that none might dare to withstand him.

Ver. 17. *In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, began Menabem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria.]* He seems to have reigned with such Fury, that none durst oppose him; but he possessed the Throne ten Years before God cut him off.

Ver. 18. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: He departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Ver. 19. *And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land:]* That is, the Land of Israel. He was Governor of Babylon, who together with *Arbaces* the Mede, slew *Sardanapalus* the last of the Assyrian Kings, and translated the Empire to the Chaldeans. For he reigned over Babylon and Nineveh, and *Arbaces* over the Medes and Persians. He was the first King of Assyria that invaded Israel, and began their Transportation out of their own Country; as *Abarbinel* gathers from 1 Chron. v. 26. And this is the first Time that we find any mention of the Kingdom of Assyria, since the Days of *Nimrod*, who erected a small Kingdom here, Gen. x. 11. And they were no great People, one would think, when the lxxiid Psalm was penned, where they are reckoned as Auxiliaries to the Children of Lot, against the Israelites, together with other small Nations: But now they had a great and powerful Empire.

And Menabem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.] By this great Present he not only turned away the Army of Pul from him, but purchased his Friendship; so that he helped to establish his Authority. Which was very tottering, by reason he was not only an Usurper, but had exercised extream great Cruelty upon his People, which no doubt made him extreamly hated, ver. 10.

Ver. 20. *And Menabem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria:]* By this means, I suppose, he thought to ingratiate himself with the common People; upon whom he laid no Tax, but charged only the Rich, according to the Proportion of their Wealth. For the Hebrew Words do not import that he made every rich Man in Israel pay fifty Shekels; but that he gave to the King of Assyria so many Shekels for every Man, that is, for every one in his Army. So they run exactly, *to give to the king of Assyria fifty shekels of silver for each Man.*

So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.] At that Time he departed; but it is likely he afterward returned, in the Reign of *Pekah*, and made the Deportation before-mentioned.

Ver. 21. *And the rest of the acts of Menabem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ver. 22. *And Menabem slept with his fathers, and Pekabiah his son reigned in his stead.]* This shews him to have been a mighty Man, that notwithstanding his Violence and Cruelty, he left the Kingdom in his Family: Which the two foregoing Kings could not do. But it is evident, there was an *Interregnum* of a Year between the Reign of *Menabem* and *Pekabiah*: For *Pekabiah* did not begin his Reign 'till the fiftieth Year of *Azariah* (as it here follows) and *Menabem* died the Year before; for he began to reign in the thirty-ninth of *Azariah* (ver. 17.) and reigned but ten Years.

Ver. 23. *In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekabiah the son of Menabem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years.]* His reign was short; both because he himself was wicked, and his Father also was an Usurper.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.]* He was the wicked Son of a wicked Father; and so perished (as it here follows) by such a Conspiracy as his Father made against *Shallum*.

Ver. 25. *And Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the kings house, with Arbob, and Arieth,]* These were two valiant Men, who some think were in the Conspiracy with him against *Pekabiah*. But *Abarbinel* rather thinks they were two eminent Courtiers, who were always about the King.

And with him fifty men of the Gileadites:] Who were his Guards, and perhaps assisted him in his Treason.

And he killed him, and reigned in his stead.] He was a great Commander under *Pekabiah*; for the Hebrew Word *Shalish* signifies more than a bare Captain. Therefore *Josephus* calls him a *Chiliarch*, or an Officer over a thousand Men. And the Word carrying in it the Notion of three, some later Writers have therefore thought him to be the third Person in the Kingdom, next the King. No question he was some considerable Person, who had Soldiers at his Command to execute his Designs.

Ver. 26. *And the rest of the acts of Pekabiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.*

Ver. 27. *In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.]* This is the fifth King that reigned over Israel during the reign of *Azariah* King of Judah.

Ver. 28. *He did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.*

Ver. 29. *In the days of Pekah king of Israel,]* In the last Year of his Reign, as the Jews say in *Seder Olam Rabba*.

Came Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria,] He was the Son of *Pul*, and is called by other Authors *Pul*, or *Phul-Assur*, and here *Tiglath-Pul-Assur*:
The

The former Part of this Name being taken from the River *Tigris*, which is called by the Inhabitants *Diglito*: From whose Borders this King came.

And took *Ijon*, and *Abel-beth-maachab*,] Two strong Towns mentioned 1 Kings xv. 20. See there.

And *Janoah*, a city in the tribe of *Ephraim*,] Josh. xvi. 6.

And *Kedesh*, and *Hazor*,] Which were in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, Josh. xii. 22. xix. 36.

And *Gilead*,] Which was on the other Side *Jordan*.

And *Galilee*, all the land of *Naphtali*,] The upper *Galilee*; which was possessed by this Tribe, and by *Zebulun*.

And carried them captive to *Affyria*.] This was the second Deportation of the ten Tribes; the first being made by *Pul*, as I said before, who carried away the two Tribes and half beyond *Jordan*; and this second was made by his Son, who carried away two other Tribes. Then nine Years after, followed a third in the Days of the next King (xviii. 9.) when the Remainder of the ten Tribes were carried away from their own Land. The Tribe of *Judah* still remained; but about eight Years after the former, Part of that was carried away by *Sennacherib*, when he took all their fenced Cities, xviii. 13. which with respect to the whole Country, the *Jews* call the fourth Deportation. Then a fifth followed, xxiv. 15. and a sixth, xxv. 1, &c. The last is mentioned, xxv. 25. Thus they are reckoned up by *Abarbinel*; and in this second (the *Jews* say in *Seder Olam Rabba*) *Tiglath-Pileser* carried away the Golden Calf which was in *Dan*. But see a more exact Account of *Judah's* Captivity in Mr. *Whiston's* learned *Chronology* of the Old Testament, p. 52.

Ver. 30. And *Hoshea* the son of *Elah* made a conspiracy against *Pekah* the son of *Remaliah*,] Who *Hoshea* was, or what was the Ground of his Conspiracy, is not recorded; but we may suppose it to have been, because he governed ill, and by his cruel War with *Judah* had brought the King of *Affyria* upon his own Kingdom (2 Chron. xxviii. 16.) and thereby lost a great Part of it.

And smote him, and slew him,] As *Pekah* had served *Pekahiah*.

And reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of *Jotham* the king of *Judah*. These Words create a Difficulty; for it is said, ver. 33. that *Jotham* reigned but sixteen Years. Which *Seder Olam Rabba* thus reconciles (for none can think any Writer whatsoever would so soon contradict himself) that this Conspiracy was begun in the latter End of *Jotham's* Reign, but not put in Execution 'till four Years after his Death. So that these Words are to be understood as if he had said, *Twenty years after Jotham began to reign over Judah Pekah was slain*. Dr *Lightfoot* gives another Account of it; that the Wickedness of *Abaz* was so great, that the holy Writer would not mention him on this Occasion, but rather speaks of his good Father, as if he were yet alive, in which he follows *R. Solomon Jarchi*. But this hath no shew of Truth in it; since so much is said of *Abaz* in the following Part of this History. A late very Learned Writer (in his *Short View of the Chronology of the Old*

Testament, p. 47.) hath given a better Account of it, in these Words, *Because there had been yet no mention made of Abaz's Reign, therefore the old Epocha of his Predecessor Jotham is still made use of*. But the plain Truth is, that *Jotham* reigned four Years with his Father *Azariah*.

Ver. 31. And the rest of the acts of *Pekah*, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of *Israel*.] In that Book which is now called by the Name of *Chronicles* his War with *Judah* is recorded, 2 Chron. xxviii.

Ver. 32. In the second year of *Pekah* the son of *Remaliah* king of *Israel*, began *Jotham* the son of *Uzziah* king of *Judah* to reign.] Why he should be all along called *Azariah*, and here only *Uzziah*, and ver. 34. no Account can be given; unless it were to shew he had two Names, as I observed, ver. 1. And it appears by the Book of *Chronicles* that *Uzziah* was as much used, when that Book was written, as the other.

Ver. 35. Twenty five years old was he when he began to reign,] Alone by himself; for he reigned some Time with his Father during his Leprosy. See Dr *Lightfoot* in his *Prolegom.* to the *Harm.* of the *Evang.* Sect. 6.

And he reigned sixteen years in *Jerusalem*: and his mothers name was *Jerusha*, the daughter of *Zadok*.] It is not said of what Place, as is usual: This *Zadok* being so well known, that there was no need to set down his Dwelling.

Ver. 34. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD:] ἡ δὲ ἐκείνη ἀρετὴ ἀπελείπει] he wanted no Virtue belonging to a good Prince, as *Josephus* writes (Lib. 9. *Antiq.* Chap. 11.) being, faith he, *pious towards God, just towards Men, and studious of the publick Good*.

He did according to all that is his father *Uzziah* had done.] That is, according to all the good he had done; but did not imitate him in invading the Priests Office.

Ver. 35. Howbeit, the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still in the high places:

He built the high gate of the house of the LORD.] which was between the House of the King, and the House of the LORD, xviii. 20. It was built by *Solomon*; but this King added a noble Structure to it.

Ver. 36. Now the rest of the acts of *Jotham*, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of *Judah*?] See 2 Chron. xxvii.

Ver. 37. (In those days the LORD began to send against *Judah*, *Rezin* king of *Syria*, and *Pekah* the son of *Remaliah*.)] These two Kings entred into a Confederacy against *Judah*, and made Preparations for War before *Jotham* died; but he was so happy as to be laid in his Grave in Peace; their Design being not executed 'till the Reign of the next King.

Ver. 38. And *Jotham* slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of *David* his father, and *Abaz* his son reigned in his stead.

CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. **I**N the seventeenth year of *Pekah* the son of *Remaliah*, *Abaz* the son of *Jotham* king of *Judah* began to reign.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *Twenty years old was Abaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.*] He was a little more than twenty Years old. See upon xviii. 2.

And did not that which was right in the sight of the L O R D his God, like David his father.] As might have been expected from the good Education which, no doubt, so pious a Man as *Jotham* his Father gave him; who left him an excellent Example.

Ver. 3. *But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the L O R D cast out before the children of Israel.*] He was far worse than any of the preceding Kings of *Israel*; for he imitated those abominable Idolaters, whom God rooted out of the Land of *Canaan*. Who it is most certain sometimes burnt their Children in the Fire, as Sacrifices to their Gods, *Deut. xii. 31.* and the Children of *Israel* it is certain imitated them, *Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. Ezek. xxxiii. 37, and 39.* But whether *Abaz* did that, or only made his Son pass through the Fire by Way of Lustration (as they called it) cannot be determined. It is no Argument that he did not offer him as a burnt Sacrifice, because *Heczekiah* out-lived him; for he had more Sons, it is likely, than him. See concerning this horrible Impiety, what I have noted upon *Levit. xviii. 21.* and upon *Deut. xviii. 10.*

Ver. 4. *And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.*] He added this to all his other Sins (of consecrating his Son to *Moloch* by passing him through the Fire, if not offering him in Sacrifice) that he himself sacrificed in high Places, and on Hills, and under every green Tree; by his Example encouraging this Practice, which other Kings had only tolerated. So we read, that People sacrificed in high Places, even in good Kings Reigns, *xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4, &c.* But as they sacrificed to God in those Reigns, so we never read 'till now that any of those Kings sacrificed there themselves, as this King did; who not merely suffered this, but gave Countenance to it by his own Practice, and thereby strengthened this Licence of private sacrificing, contrary to the Law of God; and which was worst of all, sacrificing to other Gods; it being very probable that he fancied some Deity to inhabit under every well-spread flourishing Tree.

Ver. 5. *Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Abaz, but could not overcome him.*] This seems not to agree with *2 Chron. xxviii. 5, &c.* where these two Princes are represented as getting great Victories over him. To which *Abarbinel* answers, that these things hapened at different Times. For the Wars mentioned in the Book of *Chronicles* were made severally by these two Kings, wherein they prospered; being the Ministers of Divine Providence. But when now they joined their Forces together, and not only came against other Cities, but against *Jerusalem*, God was pleased to make them miscarry.

Ver. 6. *And at that time Rezin king of Syria,*] When he broke up the Siege of *Jerusalem*, upon

Intelligence he received that *Tiglath-pileser* was coming to its Relief.

Restored Elath to Syria,] This was a considerable Port upon the Red-Sea.

And drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there to this day.] This City had been recovered to the Dominion of *Judab* by *Azariah*, *xiv. 22.* who took it from the *Syrians*; who now took it from them again; that they might not quite lose the Fruit of their Expedition against *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 7. *So Abaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria,*] There is a learned Man of our own, who hath lately given another Account of the Name of *Pileser*, than that above-mentioned, *xv. 29.* For he thinks it is compounded of the Names of two of their Gods; *Pil* being the same with *Bel*, and *Azer* or *Azar* was the Name of a Planet worshipped by the *Persians*, viz. *Mars*: And they much affected to have the Names of their Gods in their own Names; which was a common thing also among the *Jews*: For which Reason the Name of *Tiglath* was added, which was the Name of *Tygris* (as I observed before) which, as all great beneficial Rivers, Mountains, and Trees, were accounted sacred among the Heathen. See *Dr Hyde Histor. Relig. Vet. Persar. Cap. 3.*

Saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.] He not only put himself and all he had into his Protection; but made himself his Subject, to hold all he had of him by his Favour. For that is the Meaning of *I am thy servant and thy son*; that is, he was content to be his Vassal, if he would be his Protector.

Ver. 8. *And Abaz took the silver and the gold that was found in the house of the L O R D, and in the treasures of the kings house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria.*] These Treasures had been sent some Years ago by *Jeboash* to the King of *Syria*, *xii. 18.* but it seems they were well replenished again by the Piety of his Successors, *Amaziah*, *Azariah*, but especially *Jotham*.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Assyria hearkned unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it,*] It is very uncertain when King *Abaz* sent to desire this Help. If it was when they were preparing to besiege *Jerusalem*, it was the Effect of his great Infidelity; for God had been so gracious to him, as to promise by the Prophet *Isaiab*, that those Kings should do him no Hurt (*Isa. vii. 4.*) giving him a Sign also to strengthen his Faith. Others think, it was after the King of *Syria* and the King of *Israel* had miserably harrassed *Abaz's* Country, though they could not take *Jerusalem*, as we read *2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6, &c.* Whensoever it was, the King of *Assyria* gave a powerful Diversion to the King of *Syria*, invading his Country, and besieging the chief City of it, of which he made himself Master.

And carried the people of it captive to Kir,] A Place in the Country of the upper *Media*, as *Josephus* tells us: From whence he brought some People, to plant in *Damascus*.

And slew Rezin.] Who was the last of their Kings; for the Syrians never got up again, as the *Jeos* observe in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 20. Whether he was legal Successor to *Ben-hadad* the Son of *Hazaël*, or an Usurper, is not certain.

Ver. 10. *And king Abaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria.*] To compliment him upon his Success; and perhaps to do him Homage, and to request him to do as much against *Pekab*, as he had done against *Rezin*. For some think that after this he went and took all those Places from *Israel*, which are mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 29. And after all he fell upon *Judah* it self, and made great Spoil there also, as is suggested in 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 20, 21.

And he saw an altar that was in Damascus:] A beautiful Altar, both for the Matter and Form of it.

And king Abaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof.] Not only the Height, and Breadth, and Shape of it; but all the Carvings, I suppose, with the Figures and Images wherewith it was adorned.

Ver. 11. *And Urijah the priest built an altar, according to all that king Abaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against the king came from Damascus.*] He took Care to have it done exactly according to the Pattern; directly contrary to the Command of God, who had appointed what kind of Altar he would have (*Exod.* xxvii. 1, 2, &c.) and that no other should be made of any Matter or Figure whatsoever. But there are always some Men to be found that will comply with the most wicked Commands.

Ver. 12. *And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar:*] That is, liked it, and approved of it, as perfectly made agreeable to his Mind.

And the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.] The Morning Sacrifice: Which he was so presumptuous, perhaps, as to offer himself. But not to God; for we are told expressly, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 23, that he sacrificed to the Gods of *Damascus*. A wonderful Blindness! To worship those Gods, and expect Help from them, who could not preserve their own Country from Ruin.

Ver. 13. *And he burnt his burnt-offering.*] Some understand it, that he burnt it with Spices.

And his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace-offerings upon the altar.] These were all prescribed by the Law of *Moses*: But he offered them in a wrong Place, and unto other Gods.

Ver. 14. *And he brought also the brazen altar that was before the LORD, from the fore-front of the house; from between the altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of the altar.*] By these Words, it is plain that *Urijah* had a little more Modesty than *Abaz*: For he had placed *Abaz* his Altar behind the Altar of the LORD, between it and the East-gate of the Court of the Priests. But when *Abaz* came, he removed *Solomon's* Altar out of its Place, which was before the Sanctuary, and set it toward the North-side of the Court; that he

might bring up his own; and set it there, where the Altar of the LORD had stood. See *Dr Lightfoot of the Temple*, Chap. 34, latter End.

Ver. 15. *And king Abaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar,*] Which he had now erected in the Place of God's Altar.

Burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the kings burnt-sacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offerings of all the people of the land, and their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice:] He makes a solemn Injunction, that all the publick Sacrifices, of what Sort soever they were, whether made by himself, or by the People, should be constantly offered upon his Altar. Which he calls *the great altar*, because it was much bigger, I suppose, than the Altar of God.

And the brazen altar shall be for me to enquire by.] He would not have it thought that he intended wholly to lay aside the Altar made by *Solomon*: But rather to do it great Honour, by reserving it for his own private Use; when he pleased to enquire of God by it. But there being no Mention of the Name of the LORD, some think the Meaning is no more, but that he would have it stand where he had set it, 'till he considered what to do with it: And they fancy that he made the famous Dial of *Abaz* with the Brass of it. So they understand the Hebrew Words *il lebaker*, I will take Care of it, and order what shall be done with it. And therefore, according to this Interpretation, he laid it quite aside. But the other seems more agreeable to the Hebrew Phrase, *it shall be to me to enquire, or seek, or pray*: A private Altar for his proper Use: Whereby he pretended to have still some Regard to it, though he had degraded it.

Ver. 16. *So did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Abaz commanded.*] Whatsoever good Inclinations he had, they were all overruled by the Commands of the King, with which he entirely complied.

Ver. 17. *And king Abaz cut off the borders of the bases,*] See 1 *Kings* vii. 28, 29.

And removed the laver from off them, and took down the sea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of stones.] This was done out of Contempt, that the Sea might not appear so great and stately, nor be so useful to the Priests, as it was before. For he intended quite to abolish, not only to deface the Service of God at the Temple. So we read in 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 24, that he shut up the doors of the house of God, that none should worship there.

Ver. 18. *And the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house,*] There is a vast Variety of Opinions concerning this *Musach* (which we translate *Covert*) and why it is called the *Covert for the Sabbath*. The most probable is, that it was a covered Place, where the King sat in the Porch of the Temple, or at the Entrance of it, upon the Sabbath, or other great Solemnities, which were called by that Name. Thus *Procopius Gazæus*. This *Abaz* took away, intending not to trouble himself to come to the Temple; but to sacrifice any where:

In

In every corner of *Jerusalem*, and in the several cities of *Judah*, which he would have be thought as holy as *Jerusalem*, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 24, 25. And it is a probable Conjecture of a very learned Man of our own, that *Abaz* did this to express his Hatred and Contempt of the Sabbath: For the Worship of Idols, and Violation of the Sabbath, are frequently joined together in Scripture, especially in *Ezekiel* xx. 16. xxii. 8, 9. xxiv. 37, 38, and in a remarkable Place in the *Maccabees*, i. 44. See *Spencer de Leg. Hebræor.* Lib. i. Cap. i. 12.

And the kings entry without, turned he from the house of the LORD,] The Passage through which the King came from his own House to the Temple, he turned another Way.

For the king of Assyria.] That he might ingratiate himself with him, by contemning his own Country Religion, and approaching nearer to his. But *Procopius* takes it the quite contrary Way, that he did this for fear of the king of Assyria. Which moved him to make a shorter Passage into the House of the LORD, that he might flee thither instantly for Safety, in case of any Danger. Which is not probable; because he profaned it, and shut up the Doors of it.

Ver. 10. Now the rest of of the acts of *Abaz*, which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of *Judah*?

Ver. 20. And *Abaz* slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of *David*, and *Hezekiah* his son reigned in his stead.

C H A P. XVII.

Verse 1. **I**N the twelfth year of *Abaz*, king of *Judah*, began *Hoshea* the son of *Elah* to reign in *Samaria* over *Israel* nine years.] This doth not agree with xv. 30, where it is said he began to reign in the twentieth Year of *Jotham*, which was the fourth of *Abaz*. To this *Rabbag*, thinks it sufficient to say, that 'till the twelfth Year of *Abaz* he was but a Servant of the King of Assyria; nor was reputed a King, but only a Governour under him. And so *Abarbinel*. And it is no improbable Conjecture of *Dr Lightfoot's*, that *Abaz* gave him a great deal of Trouble, after the Death of *Pekah*, in Revenge of the Slaughters he had made in *Judah*: So that he kept *Hoshea* out of the Throne a great while, and upon this Account is called the King of *Israel* (2 *Chron.* xxviii. 19.) as well as because he walked in the Ways of those Kings. Our learned Chronologer *Mr Whiston* thinks there was an *Interregnum* for the Space of full twelve Years, from the Death of *Jeroboam* the second. Which he takes to be most probable, and almost certain, from those Words of *Hosea*, who prophesied in that King's Time, Now (or e'er long) they shall say, we have no king, because we feared not the Lord, what then should a king do to us? *Hosea* x. 3. See his short View of the Chronology of the Old Testament, p. 48.

And he reigned in *Samaria* over *Israel* nine years.] Viz. after his peaceable Possession of the Throne. For from the Time that he pretended to it, upon the Slaughter of *Pekah*, he reigned seven-

teen or eighteen Years; viz. twelve in the Time of *Abaz*, who reigned sixteen Years; and six in the Time of *Hezekiah*, xviii. 10.

Ver. 2. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of *Israel* that were before him.] For he did not hinder his People from going to worship at *Jerusalem*: But, as the *Hebrew Doctors* say, took away the Guard that *Jeroboam* set in the Passage, to keep Men from going to the solemn Feasts there. And one of the golden Calves being carried away captive, his Devotion, it is likely, was not great for the other remaining. And yet notwithstanding, God exterminated *Israel* in his Days: To shew (saith *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 22.) that it was not meerly for the Sake of their Kings, upon whom the *Israelites* cast all the Blame of their Depravation, that they were carried captive. See ver. 17, 18, 19, &c.

Ver. 3. Against him came up *Sbalmaneser* king of Assyria,] Some take this to be but another Name for *Tiglath-pileser*. For which I find no Ground, and rather think *Sbalmaneser* was his Son, and Successor in the Kingdom of Assyria.

And *Hoshea* became his servant, and gave him presents.] Made himself a Tributary to him; and presented him with Gifts in token of his Subjection to him, and as an Earnest of his future Obedience.

Ver. 4. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in *Hoshea*: for he had sent messengers to *So*, king of *Egypt*, and brought no presents to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year:] He designed to shake off his Yoke, and be no longer his Subject, as he found by two undeniable Evidences. First, that he had sent to treat with the King of *Egypt*; and denied him the usual Tribute, which he was bound to pay him every Year. *St Hierom* calls this King of *Egypt*, *Sua*, and *Josephus* calls him *Soan*, and the LXX *Segor*, who is the same with the famous *Sabakon*, an *Ethiopian* mentioned by *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Herodotus*. See *Sir J. Marsham*, *Can. Chron.* §. xvi, and our famous *Usher* in his *Annals*, vid. A. 3989.

Therefore the king of Assyria shut up, and bound him in prison.] He first besieged *Samaria*, and when he had taken it, made him a close Prisoner: The History of which follows.

Ver. 5. Then the king of Assyria went up throughout all the land,] He first possessed himself of the Country of *Moab* (as the same great *Primate* observes) that he might leave no Enemies at his Back; and destroyed their two chief Cities, *Ar* and *Kir-hares*, according to the Prediction of *Isaiah*, xvi. ver. 1. and the last: And then he invaded the Kingdom of *Israel*, and possessed himself of it.

And went up to *Samaria*, and besieged it three years.] *Josephus* rightly observes two Expeditions of this King against the Land of *Israel*. First, when he made *Hoshea* Tributary to him; and now, when he made himself Master of the whole Country, and besieged the capital City, Lib. 9. *Antiq.* Cap. 13.

Ver. 6. In the ninth year of *Hoshea*, the king of Assyria took *Samaria*, and carried *Israel* away into Assyria, and placed them in *Halab*, and in *Habor*,

Habor, by the river of Gozan,] There is no Reason that any should imagine these *Israelites* were carried into *Colchis*, *Iberia*, *Armenia* the less, and the farthest *Scythia*, when the Scripture saith so expressly that they were carried into *Assyria*, and the Cities of the *Medes*: And when the very Places are to be found into which they are said here to be carried in those Countries, viz. *Chalar*, and *Chabor*, and *Gozan*: For what was *Chalach* (as *Bochartus* observes) but *Ptolemy's Chalachena*, or the North of *Assyria*: And *Chabor* is plainly enough the same with his *χαβώγας*, a Mountain between *Media* and *Assyria*. Between which Mountain and the *Caspian Sea* there is the City *Gauzan*, that is *Gozan*, between the two Channels of the River *Cyrus*.

And in the cities of the Medes.] Whither *Tiglath-Pileser* had carried others of them out of *Galilee*.

Ver. 7. *For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had served other Gods.]* This they had done a long Time: For from the Beginning of *Jeroboam's* Schism to the carrying *Israel* captive was two hundred and sixty-three Years.

Ver. 8. *And walked in the statutes of the heathen (whom God had cast out from before the children of Israel)]* Of the *Amorites* and other impious People; whom he expelled from the Land of *Canaan*, to make room for them.

And of the kings of Israel, which they had made.] Viz. the golden Calves, whose Worship the kings of *Israel* had ordained, to keep them from going up to worship God at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 9. *And the children of Israel did secretly those things which were not right, against the LORD their God;]* Besides the publick Impiety authorized by their Kings, they privately exercised Idolatry, according to their own Fancy.

And they built them high places in all their cities,] They were not content to worship upon Hills and Mountains, but they raised high Places in all Cities to offer Sacrifice.

From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced cities.] In all Places, both those that were desert, and those that were inhabited; or both in the Country, and in the City. For the Tower of the watchmen are thought to be those little Houses which the Country People built, wherein to watch their Flocks and their Fruits, and preserve them from wild Beasts or Robbers.

Ver. 10. *And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree.]* The Hebrew Word *Asherim*, which we translate Groves, should be rendered Idols of that Name, as *Selden* hath observed, *Syntag. de Diis Syris*, 2. Cap. 2. Where he plainly demonstrates this Word doth not signify the Grove, but the *Numen* or *Deity* placed in the Grove. For how should Groves be set under every green Tree? as it is here said the *Asherim* were. And thus *Kimchi* said in the Root *Ashur*, that every wooden Thing that was worshipped, was called *Asherah*. And *Procopius Gazæus* observes, that this Word which the LXX here translate ἄλσιν Groves, others every where translate Ἀσασώδ, which

Word, saith he, Ἀσασώδ τὴν Ἀσάρτην, Ἀφροδίτην, denotes *Astarte*, that is *Venus*.

Ver. 11. *And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen, whom the LORD carried away before them, and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger.]* For, as the Son of *Syrac* expresses it, they sought out all wickedness, 'till the vengeance came upon them. See *Ecclus* xlvii. ult.

Ver. 12. *For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, ye shall not do these things.]* They worshipped many other Gods, which were meer Idols, against the express Command of God, *Exod.* xx. 23. *Deut.* iv. 15, 16, &c.

Ver. 13. *Yet the LORD testified against Israel and Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers,]* I have before noted, that *Abarbinel* in his Commentary on these Books, hath observed one or more Prophets that were in every King's Reign, both in *Israel* and *Judah*, from the Time of *Saul* to *Zedekiah*, in whose Time *Jerusalem* was laid desolate. These admonished them of their Duty, as it here follows, and endeavoured to preserve them in God's true Religion, or to recover them when they apostatized from it; particularly in the Days of this very King, when *Israel* was carried captive, they had the Prophets, *Hosea*, *Amos*, *Isaiab*, and *Micah*: And in the Days of the last King when *Judah* was carried captive, they had *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*.

Saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, and my statutes, according to all the laws which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.] As he had given them his Laws by *Moses*; so he continued a Succession of Prophets after him, whom he sent to call upon them to observe these Laws.

Ver. 14. *Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers,]* A Metaphor taken from refractory Oxen, that will not bow down their Necks to the Yoke. Even so the *Israelites* refused to submit to the Yoke of God's Laws.

That did not believe in the LORD their God.] This was the Original of all the Sins they committed: They did not believe God's Prophets, but hearkened to Deceivers.

Ver. 15. *And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them,]* By his Servants the Prophets.

And they followed vanities,] So Idols are called, which, as the Apostle speaks, are nothing; having no Power to do either Hurt or Good.

And became vain,] Like the Idols they worshipped; senseless, sottish, and good for nothing.

And went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them.] *Exod.* xxiii. 24, 32, and many other Places.

Ver. 16. *And they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove,]* The making a Grove was a greater Impiety than is commonly imagined. For in their Groves they worshipped *Baalim*, as appears from *Judges* iii. 7; that is, Heroes, to whom those Groves were conse-

consecrated, being their Sepulchre. And here many filthy Rites were practised, in Honour of *Venus, Bacchus*, and such like Deities.

And worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.] They grew worse and worse, not contenting themselves with the Worship of the two Calves, &c. but worshipped the Stars of Heaven (against which *Moses* had given them a particular Caution, *Deut. iv. 19.*) *Saturn, Jupiter, Venus*, and the *Moon*, but especially *Baal*, which was the Sun.

Ver. 17. *And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments,*] Which were the most abominable Sins of the Heathen. See *Lev. xviii. 21. xix. 26. xx. 2, 3, &c.* and *Deut. xviii. 10.* and upon ver. 3. of the foregoing Chapter.

And sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.] They were so industrious to do wickedly, and so incessant in it, as if they had been Slaves that were sold to that Drudgery.

Ver. 18. *Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight,*] From the Holy Land, where his Temple was, in which he dwelt among them.

'Till there was none left, but the tribe of Judah only.] Unto whom adhered part of *Benjamin* and the *Levites*: Who, as it here follows, imitated the Wickedness of *Israel*; but yet had some Mixture of good Kings among them. Whereas all the Kings of *Israel* persisted in the Sins of *Jeroboam*: And therefore before their Removal out of their Land, they suffered great Calamities, no less than nine of their Kings being killed (as *Abarbinel* notes) before their last King was carried Captive.

Ver. 19. *Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.*] Followed the idolatrous Devices of the ten Tribes; as they did most notoriously in the lost Reign of *Abaz*. Whose Son *Hezekiah* indeed made a noble Reformation; but it lasted no longer than his Time; so extremely was this Nation corrupted.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD rejected*] With Loathing and Abhorrence, as the Word imports.

All the house of Israel,] The whole ten Tribes.

And afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.] See *x. 32, 33. xiii. 3, 7.*

Ver. 21. *For he rent Israel from the house of David,*] Here was the Foundation of their Ruin.

And he made Jeroboam the son of Nebat their king; and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made Israel sin a great sin.] Of which he was the Author; but they were too forward to comply with him.

Ver. 22. *For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them:*] They were so inclined to Idolatry, that a long Succession of God's Judgments upon them could not reclaim them.

Ver. 23. *Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets.*] Unto whose Admonitions and Threatnings they had no Regard.

VOL. II.

So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria, unto this day.] As they sold themselves to do evil, (ver. 17.) so God delivered them up to be Slaves to those whose Gods they had worshipped, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 24. *And the king of Assyria brought men.*] This was not done by *Shalmaneser*, but by his Son *Eser-baddon*, *Ezra iv. 2.*

From Babylon,] Which was then subject to the King of *Assyria*; but not long after revolted.

And from Cuthah,] A City of *Chaldæa*, as *Abarbinel* expounds it. And so doth our Dr *Hyde* out of several *Persian Writers*, *Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. Cap. 2.* But it rather here signifies a Country called *Cush* also (which perhaps had its Name from the forenamed City) from whence the greatest Part of this Colony being brought, the People in after-times were called *Cuthæi*. For the same Author truly observes that the Country called *Cush* was in the *Babylonish* Dialect (afterwards called the *Chaldean*) called *Cuth*. For they were wont to change the Letter *Schin* into *Thau*. In this Country, in the Land of *Shinar*, *Cush* first settled; and his Posterity spread itself into *Arabia*.

And from Ava,] The *Avites* were a very ancient People, who were driven by the *Caph-torim* out of *Hazerim*; and went and settled beyond *Euphrates*. See upon *Deut. ii. 23.*

And from Hamath,] This was a City of *Syria*, on the Borders of *Canaan*; which was now subject to the King of *Assyria* by a late Conquest of it, *xvi. 9.*

And from Sepharvaim,] There is a City called *Siphara*, on the Side of which the River *Euphrates* runs, not far from the Sea. From this Mixture of Nations it was, that afterward there happened such a Confusion of Laws, and Manners, and Rites of Religion, as was in this Country.

And placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria,] That is, the whole Country, wherein the ten Tribes formerly dwelt.

And dwelt in the cities thereof.] Which were not destroyed, I suppose, but left standing, with a Design to send new Inhabitants into them.

Ver. 25. *And it was so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which slew some of them.*] And did not the *Israelites* also want the Fear of the LORD, as *Abarbinel* here notes, and yet were not devoured by Lions? To which he answers, that though the *Israelites* also served Idols, yet they did not deny the Divine Power and Providence; but imagined these Idols to be the intermediate Causes by which the Divine Influences might be conveyed unto them: For it is plain *Jeroboam* did not deny the LORD, (*1 Kings xiii. 6.*) but acknowledged his Power. But these new Inhabitants believed the Idols which they worshipped to be true Gods; and therefore were destroyed by Lions, because they did not acknowledge the Power and Providence of God over all inferior Beings, whose Land this was; and hereby he vindicated his ancient Inheritance and Possession to himself.

T t t 2

Ver. 26.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they spake unto the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore he hath sent lions among them, and behold, they slay them; because they know not the manner of the God of the land.]* They took the God of Israel to be of the same kind with their own, who affected a particular Country and People, and would be honoured with peculiar Rites, which were acceptable to him, and none else. The Syrians had the same Conceit of Topical Gods, as I observed upon 1 Kings xx. 23. and see below, xviii. 35.

Ver. 27. *Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests, whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.]* The Jews in *Pirke Elieser*, Cap. 38, tell the Story thus; that the King of Assyria called the Elders of Israel together, and said: All the while you dwelt in the Land of Samaria, it was not infested with Lions; what is the Reason that my People are devoured by them? To which they answered, Our Lord the King, this Land will not receive any uncircumcised Nation; Let two of you go then, replied the King, and circumcise them, and teach them the Book of the Law. So *R. Dosithæus*, and *R. Zechariah* were sent, who did the Business. Here they make bold to go beyond the Scripture, in making two great Doctors to have been sent, when there was but one. Though it is very probable there were some Associates who accompanied this principal Priest. For the Text saith, when the King bad them carry one of the Priests thither, he added, and let them dwell there. Which signifies he did not go alone: Though he alone was to teach them, as it follows, *the manner of the God of the land.*

Ver. 28. *Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the L O R D.]* That is, how they should worship and serve him. From whence many learned Men conclude, that he brought the Book of the Law with him, without which he could not fully instruct them how to worship God, and govern themselves: Which Book they suppose was written in the *Babylonian Character*, because it was to teach a Colony of that Nation. This is opposed by a late learned Man, who earnestly contends, that the Book of the Law was not brought to them 'till the Time of *Sanballat*, and therefore this Priest instructed them without Book, only by Tradition. Which is not probable; for they would have had little Regard to him, if he had not produced the Authority of that holy Book, delivered to them by that great Law-giver *Moses*, the Man of God: For that he taught them the right Way of worshipping God, according to the Law, as it was practised in *Judah*, is very likely; being sensible that God abhorred the other Worship which *Israel* practised; for which he had thrown them out of their Land.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit, every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.]* It seems

the People of *Israel*, who are here called *Samaritans*, had built little Temples in the high Places; wherein these new Inhabitants worshipped the Gods of the Country from which they came (that is, the Gods of *Assyria*, *Ezek.* xxvii. 7.) together with the God of *Israel*.

Ver. 30. *And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth,]* The Jewish Doctors do but trifle in their Exposition in this Word, which they say signifies an *Hen* and *Chickens*. The Word plainly imports the *Tabernacles of Daughters*, or of young *Maidens*: Who were consecrated to *Venus*, whose Name Mr *Selden* probably conjectures was derived from *Benoth*. The old Idolaters, it is evident, did prostitute their Daughters in Honour of *Venus*, as not only *Strabo*, *Herodotus*, and other profane Writers testify; but some think is suggested in holy Scripture, *Lev.* xix. 29. And therefore they of *Babylon* are said to make the *Tabernacles of Daughters*; that is, Chapels wherein their Daughters were prostituted to every one that came to worship *Venus*, as the Manner was in *Babylon*; from whence the fore-named Authors testify this Filthiness had its Original. See *Selden de Diis Syris*, *Syntag.* 2. Cap. 7. and *Vossius de Idololatr.* Lib. 2. Cap. 22.

And the men of Cuth made Nergal,] Which the Jews would have to signify a *Cock*. But their Conjecture is better, who think it signified *Fire*. For the Men of *Cuth* are those that were afterward called *Persians*; who it is certain anciently worshipped the *Fire*. See *Selden*, Cap. 8. But the famous *Bochart* ingenuously confesses he doth not know what *Nergal* was; but that there is a Sort of Palm-Tree called *Nergil*, by the *Persians*, *Arabians*, and *Indians*, of which they report strange Things. From whence, perhaps, the *Persians* gave the Name of *Nergal* to this Idol, as in *Syria* their God was called *Rimmon* from the *Pomegranate*. *Hiero-zoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 16.

And the men of Hamath made Asbima,] I know no Ground the Jews have to say, this Word *Asbima* signifies a smooth Goat. Our great *Selden* modestly acknowledges he doth not know what God it was, *Ib.* Cap. 9. But a late Author takes *Asbima* to be the same with *Mars*: Because among the Ancients *AS* signified the same with *Agns* among the *Greeks*, and *Schemah* is as much as hearing or obedient, *Jo. Gensius, de Victimis Humanis*, p. i. p. 92. And this *AS* he conjectures is the same, whom the *Romans* called *Hesus*, whom *Lucan* mentions in his *Pharsalia*, Lib. 1. ver. 443.

——— *Horrentque feris altaribus Hesus.*

But after all, I think my learned Friend Dr *Alix* hath made the most probable Conjecture, that *Asbima* is the Name of God, whom the *Hebrews* call *Hashem*, the Name: From whence *Asbima*, I doubt not, is derived. Accordingly *Aben-Ezra* saith in his Preface to the Book of *Esther*, that he saw in a *Samaritan Pentateuch*, *Genesis* i. 1. *Bara Asbima*, instead of *Bara Elohim*. Which *Bochart* censures as a Falsity, because no such Word is to be found in the whole *Samaritan Pentateuch*; but it might be then in some Paraphrase upon it.

Ver. 31.

Ver. 31. *And the Avites made Nibbaz, and Tartach,]* No body knows what these were; for no Credit is to be given to the *Jews*, who say the former was in the Shape of a *Dog*, and the other of an *afs*. *Selden* thinks they were the same Idol called by different Names, but was not able to give an Account of them.

And the Sepharvaites burnt their children in the fire to Adramelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim.] These were the same Gods with *Moloch*; unto whom the same Sacrifices were offered. The *Jews* after their vain Fancies make one of them to have been in the Form of a *Peacock*, and the other of a *Pheasant*: But in all Probability they were but different Names of *Moloch*, which was the Sun, as is evident from xxiii. 10, 11. And the Addition of *Addir*, which signifies Magnificent or Potent, makes *Adramelech* as much as the mighty *Moloch*. And of *Ana*, which signifies to answer, makes *Anammelech* as much as *Oracular Moloch*. For *Moloch*, and *Melech*, and *Milcom*, are all the very same in the Language of different People, signifying a *King*: The Sun being by them accounted the *King*, as the Moon the *Queen of Heaven*. And there is nothing more known than that the *Gentiles* burnt their Children in Sacrifice to them. But whether these People did so, or only made them pass through the Fire to purify them, may be questioned; tho' the Words seem to import the former: Which was the Practice of the *Phœnicians*, *Syrians*, *Tyrians*, *Carthaginians*, *Cretians*, *Arabians*, and many other Nations; and is still practised by the *Americans*, and other *Gentiles*.

A Learned Writer of our own, Dr *Hyde*, in the Book before-mentioned, had a quite different Apprehension of these Words: For he will have *Adramelech* to signify the *King of the flock*, *Adre* being as much as *Greges*: And *Anammelech* he thinks is much of the same Signification, *Ana* being as much as *Pecus* in the *Persian* Language; always signifying collectively in the Plural Number, the lesser Cattle, Sheep and Goats. Of which he imagines these Gods had the Care, and were therefore worshipped, the Riches of those People consisting much in Cattle. They were also celestial Constellations (as he there observes) which they imagined promoted the Breeding and Growth of Cattle.

Ver. 32. *So they feared the LORD,]* Worshipped the LORD God of *Israel*.

And made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.] I suppose these Sacrifices were offered to the God of *Israel*, but in high Places, and by Priests of their own making. As for their Sacrifices to the God of their several Countries, no doubt they brought Priests along with them, to perform the Service belonging to them.

Ver. 33. *They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations, whom they carried away from thence.]* That is, after the manner of the ten Tribes, who worshipped the LORD, and the Golden Calves together with him, and sometimes *Baal*, and other Gods, ver. 16.

Ver. 34. *Unto this day they do after the former manner: they fear not the LORD, neither*

do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel;] These, and the following Words, give an Account of the Children of *Israel*; who being carried Captive out of their own Land (as hath been related) were not at all amended thereby; but still neglected all the Laws which God had given them, and did not worship him alone; and therefore in Truth they feared not the LORD.

Ver. 35. *With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow your selves to them, nor save them, nor sacrifice to them:]* Whose Sins he aggravates (and thereby justifies his severe Proceedings against them) by representing them as a select People, who were in a strict and gracious Covenant with him, obliging them not to shew the least Respect to any other God but himself.

Ver. 36. *But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and a stretched-out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.]* This was a Benefit, one would think, that should never have been forgotten; but eternally engaged them to his Service, who delivered them from so vile a Slavery.

Ver. 37. *And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to do for evermore, and ye shall not fear other gods.]* This is repeated again, being so very often mentioned in the Book of the Law, that they should worship no other God.

Ver. 38. *And the covenant that I have made with you, ye shall not forget, neither shall ye fear other gods.]* Which was the principal Thing in the Covenant.

Ver. 39. *But the LORD your God ye shall fear, and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.]* As he did, whensoever they renounced Idolatry, and promised to worship him alone; as we read throughout their whole History, in these holy Books.

Ver. 40. *Howbeit, they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.]* They soon revolted, when they solemnly protested to repent; and did just as they had done before, as the same Books testify.

Ver. 41. *So those nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images, both their children, and their childrens children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.]* Just thus did the Nations who came in their room into the Country of *Samaria*: They joined their own Gods with the LORD God of *Israel*, and continued so to do, they and their Posterity, unto the Time this Book was written, and long after. For as Mr *Mede* hath observed, this Medley of Religions lasted above three hundred Years, 'till towards the End of the *Persian* Monarchy. At which Time *Manasse*, Brother to *Jadda* the High Priest of the *Jews* (that were returned to their own Land) married the Daughter of *Sanballat* Governour of *Samaria*. And after his Example, other *Jews* of the best Rank having married strange Wives, contrary to the Law, and being loth to leave them, betook themselves thither

thither also; whom *Sanballat* entertained, and made his Son-in-law their Priest. And when *Alexander* the Great subdued the *Persian* Monarchy, he obtained Leave of him to build a Temple upon Mount *Gerizim*, where *Manasseh* exercised the Office of High-Priest. This was very prejudicial to the *Jews*, and the Occasion of a Schism; whilst those who were discontented or excommunicated at *Jerusalem*, were wont to run hither. Yet by this means the *Samaritans* (having gotten one of the Sons of *Aaron* for their Priest, and so many *Jews* being mingled among them) were brought to throw away all their false Gods, and worship the God of *Israel* only. Yet so, that though they seemed to themselves to be the true Worshipers of God, they retained a smack of Idolatry; worshipping God under a visible Representation, viz. that of a *Dove*. Just as their Predecessors, the ten Tribes, worshipped the same God under the Similitude of a Calf, *Book 1. Discourse 13*. And indeed this Inclination to have some sensible Representation of God was so universal, that they who had none, were thought by the Gentile World to worship nothing.

C H A P. XVIII.

Verse 1. **N**OW it came to pass in the third year of *Hoshea* son of *Elah* king of *Israel*, that *Hezekiah* the son of *Abaz* king of *Judah* began to reign.] The third Year of those nine, which are mentioned before, xvii. 1. See there.

Ver. 2. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in *Jerusalem*: his mothers name also was *Abi*, daughter of *Zachariah*.] Unto this it is objected, that *Abaz* lived but thirty and six Years (xvi. 2.) and therefore, according to this Account, begat *Hezekiah* when he was but eleven Years old, which seems incredible. To which *Capellus* in his *Chronologia* answers, that he reigned two or three Years with his Father; which is not likely, for the Text saith he was twenty Years old when he began to reign, after his Father's Death, which is before-mentioned. And the Solution of the *Jews*, mentioned by *St Hierom*, is not much better, who say, he did not begin to reign presently after his Father's Death, but there was an *Interregnum* for some Years; because of a Sedition that was in *Jerusalem*. But as there is no Proof of this, so it is improbable that *Hezekiah*, who was a grown Man, and beloved of the People, should not presently succeed his Father. *Calvisius's* Account is still worse, who will have *Hezekiah*, to have been only the adopted Son of *Abaz*: Which spoils the Descent of our Saviour from *David*, as *Bochartus* observes: Who therefore plainly admits that he did beget *Hezekiah*, when he was eleven or twelve Years old. For so it may be understood, that he was but just entred upon the twenty-fifth Year of his Age, when he began his Reign; and so but twenty-four compleat. Therefore his Father begat him about the twelfth Year of his Age. For if, from thirty-six Years, four and twenty be taken, there remain twelve. And if we suppose, as we

may very well, that *Abaz* was near one and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and near seventeen Years older before he died (for the Scriptures, no more than other Writers, do not take Notice whether the Year be perfect or imperfect) then he might be near fourteen Years old when he begat *Hezekiah*. But take it according to the first Account, that he was but eleven or twelve Years old, *Bochartus* hath given a vast Number of Instances of Persons that procreated Children at that Age. For Ripeness for Procreation is not to be precisely determined, either by *Physicians*, *Philosophers*, or *Lawyers*, (who have been pleased to fix the Time) but Consideration is to be had of the Climate wherein Men live, of the Temper and Constitution of their Bodies, of their Diet, and many other things; as he observes in an Epistle to *Nicol. Carbonellus*, in his Additions to the last Edition of his *Phaleg*. p. 920.

Ver. 3. And he did that which was right in the sight of the L O R D, according to all that *David* his father did.] A Character which is not given, I think, to any of the Kings of *Judah*, since the Reign of *Asa*, 1 Kings xv. 11.

Ver. 4. He removed the high places,] Which none of his Predecessors had the Courage to attempt. But the carrying of the ten Tribes captive, I suppose, mightily awakened both him and all the People, for the present (while it was fresh before their Eyes) to observe the Law of God very strictly.

And brake the images, and cut down the groves,] Which his Father *Abaz* had multiplied, xvi. 14. 2 Chron. xxviii. 2, 24, 25.

And brake in pieces the brazen serpent that *Moses* had made:] Which had been piously preserved as a Monument of God's wonderful Mercy to them in the Wilderness; as *Gideon* intended his *Ephod* should be of another Deliverance, *Judges* viii. 27. But as they went a whoring after that, so they did after this, as the *Jews* phrase it in *Avada Zara*. And therefore *Hezekiah* broke it in Pieces; that is, as the *Talmudists* there explain it, ground it to Powder, and then scattered it into the Air, that nothing of it might remain to be worshipped as a Relique by superstitious People. And yet there is a Fable that some Fragments of it did remain 'till *Josiah's* Time; and at this Day, as *Sigonius* relates in his History of the Kingdom of *Italy*, they shew this brazen Serpent entire at the Church of *St Ambrose* in *Milan*. But the wiser *Romanists* are ashamed of it, and acknowledge it is not the Serpent made by *Moses* (which being broken in Pieces by *Hezekiah*, was never restored) but another made in Imitation of it. See *Buxtorf. Histor. Serpentis Aenei*, Cap. 6.

For unto this day; the children of *Israel* had burnt incense to it:] When this Superstition began we are not told; but no body gives a better Account of it than *David Kimchi*, whose Words are these. From the Time that the Kings of *Israel* did evil, and the Children of *Israel* followed Idolatry, until the Reign of *Hezekiah*, they offered Incense to it. For it being written in the Law of *Moses*, whosoever looks upon it shall live, they fancied they might obtain Blessings by its Mediation, and therefore thought it worthy to be worshipped. It had been kept from
Moses

Moses his Days in Memory of a Miracle, just as the Pot of *Manna* also was; and *Asa* and *Jehoshaphat* did not extirpate it when they rooted out Idolatry, because in their Reign they did not observe that the People worshipped this Serpent, or burnt Incense to it, and therefore they left it as a Memorial. But *Hezekiah* thought fit to take it quite away, when he abolished other Idolatry, because in the Time of his Father they worshipped it as an Idol. And though pious People among them accounted it only to be a Memorial of a wonderful Work, yet he judged it better to abolish it, though the Memory of the Miracle were lost together with it, than suffer it to remain, and leave the *Israelites* in Danger to commit Idolatry hereafter with it.

And he called it Nebushtan.] Some think *Hezekiah* called it by this Name; others, that the *Israelites* called it so; the Words signifying indifferently it was called *Nebushtan*, viz. by Way of Contempt and Scorn. For the Letter *Nun* at the End of a Word, the *Jews* say, is added by Way of Diminution. And *Nebosheth* signifying Brass, this is as much as to say, this Serpent was meer Brass or Copper, and had no Power in it, no Profit, no Ability to help, no Divinity; and therefore not to be worshipped with divine Honour. Thus *Kimchi*: It being called by this Name signified as much as if *Hezekiah* had said, *How could it come into any man's heart to think, that this Serpent could do any thing, which is meer brass?* Or, as *Rabag* expounds it, *this Serpent hath no more Virtue in it, than the common Brass in their Houses.* For he takes *an*, in the End of the Word, to be the same with *am*, *ipforum*. But there is a great and good Man of our own, who having endeavoured to shew that the Destruction of the old Serpent the Devil was foreshadowed by the lifting up the Brazen Serpent in the Wilderness, concludes that *Hezekiah* was moved with the greater indignation against the Worship of it, because in Truth it never was a Type of our Saviour and Redeemer, but a Figure of his grand Enemy. This made him express such Detestation of it, as is imported, he thinks, in the Word *Nebushtan*. The Signification of which is not to be found in our *Lexicons*: For though *Nebosheth* signify no more than Brass, yet *Nebushtan* imports no less than our English Words, *foul Fiend, the old Dragon, or Satan*. See *Dr Jackson, Humiliation of the Son of God*, Chap. 31. Paragr. 6.

Ver. 5. *He trusted in the LORD God of Israel,*] And not in the Help of foreign Forces, as his Father *Abaz* did, (xvi. 7.) nay, which that good King *Asa* called into his Assistance, 1 *Kings* xv. 18, 19.

So that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.] Since the Time that the Kingdoms of *Judah* and *Israel* were divided.

Ver. 6. *For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses.*] He continued to observe God's Laws through the whole Course of his Reign, to the Conclusion of it; and did not like some of his Predecessors, who began well, but fell off in the End of their Days, as *Joash* and *Amaziah* did, xii. 2. xiv. 3. 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 2, 19. xxv. 14.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD was with him, and he prospered whithersoever he went: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not.*] His prosperous Success in all his Enterprizes, which were visible Tokens of God's Presence with him, emboldned him to throw off the Yoke of the King of *Assyria*, to which *Abaz* had basely submitted, xvi. 7. which was not properly *Rebellion* in *Hezekiah*, for *Abaz* could not subject his Kingdom to the *Assyrian* Monarch, but only for his own Time: His Son was not bound to be his Slave. Therefore the Meaning is, he owned not the Authority of the *Assyrian* King over him, but looked upon himself as a free Sovereign in his own Kingdom, independent upon him. In this perhaps he was a little too forward, being very much lifted up by his Victories; but it is plain he was not able to maintain himself free from all Subjection to the King of *Assyria*, ver. 14.

Ver. 8. *He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen, to the fenced cities.*] We had this Phrase before, xvii. 19. See there. And these Words seem to signify that he smote them all the Country over, and recovered from them more than his Father had lost, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. According to the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, xiv. 18. where he bids the *Philistines* not to rejoice, because the Rod that smote them was broken (that is, *Uzziah* was dead, who had sorely afflicted them, 2 *Chron* xxvi. 6, 7.) for out of his Root should come another, that would more grievously gall them, which was *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 9. *And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah (which was the seventh year of Hoshea, son of Elah, king of Israel) that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it.*] We had an Account of the taking of *Samaria* before; and therefore the mentioning of it here again may seem needless. But as now the Year of *Hezekiah's* Reign is set down wherein it was taken, so *Abarbinel* thinks the Intention of the divine Writer was to connect these two Histories together; the taking of *Samaria*, and the Ascent of *Sennacherib* against *Jerusalem*; who eight Years after the Destruction of the former, with great Pride and Confidence imagined he should do as much by the latter.

Ver. 10. *And at the end of three years they took it, even in the sixth year of Hezekiah (that is the ninth year of Hoshea) Samaria was taken.*

Ver. 11. *And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel into Assyria, and put them in Halah, and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:*] As was before related (Chap. xvii. 6.) but could not be too oft repeated, to make Posterity dread the Judgments of God, that were fallen upon them for their Sins; as it follows again in the next Words.

Ver. 12. *Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.*] xvii. 34, 35.

Ver. 13. *Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, did Sennacherib king of Assyria,*] He was the Son of *Sbalmaneser*, and succeeded him in his Kingdom after his Death; as we read in the Book of *Tobit*, i. 15.

Come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.] That is, took a great many of them, 2 Chron. xxxii. 1.

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish,]* This shews he had not taken all the fenced Cities, for *Lachish* was a City of Judah, *Josh. xv. 39.* which is mentioned before in this Book, *xiv. 19.* and was not yet taken, though Siege was laid to it. Which when he had taken, he intended to go up against *Jerusalem*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 2. which moved *Hezekiah* to divert him from his Purpose, by begging his Pardon, as it here follows, for what he had done in shaking off his Yoke.

Saying, I have offended thee,] In denying to be subject to him, which no doubt was the Reason of this Invasion.

Return from me: that which thou puttest upon me, I will bear.] Though he had made great Provision against him, as we read, 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, &c. yet he durst not venture to abide a Siege; but chose rather to divert him, by submitting to such Conditions as he would impose upon him.

And the king of Assyria appointed to Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold.] This was a great Burden, though it was not a yearly Tribute, but only a present Payment; which his Weakness forced him to submit unto.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the L O R D,]* Which in publick Necessities they thought it was lawful to make use of, for their Preservation. Yet the *Talmudists* reckon this one of the three ill Things that *Hezekiah* did, in cutting off the *Golden Plates*, mentioned in the next Verse. See *Selden de Synedr. Lib. 2. Cap. 1. N. 4.*

And in the treasures of the kings house.] Which had been so exhausted before, that he was forced to raise the Money by other Means, as it follows, ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the L O R D, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.]* It is very probable, that when *Abaz* defaced the Temple, and shut up the Doors of it (*xvi. 17. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2, 4.*) he cut off this Gold; which *Hezekiah* took Care to repair; but was now constrained to cut it off himself. Upon which Words *Procopius Gazæus* seems to me to have very well observed; That *Hezekiah* finding he had not sufficient Treasure of his own, to answer the Imposition laid upon him, was driven by Necessity to make use of Things sacred, lest the Enemy should burn the City and the Temple. But what was thus employed, pious Kings were wont to restore as soon as they were able, out of the Spoils of War, when it was ended.

Ver. 17. *And the king of Assyria sent Tartan, and Rabsharis, and Rabshakeh from Lachish, to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem: and they went up and came to Jerusalem:]* Some of the *Jews* think, that *Sennacherib* having received the Tribute from *Hezekiah*, went to his own Land; but because *Hezekiah* did not continue to send it every Year, after some

Time returned to *Judæa* again, and besieged *Jerusalem*. But there is not a Word of this either in this Book, or the *Chronicles*, or in the Prophet *Isaiab*: Therefore it is more probable, that having received the Money he demanded, he made his Expedition into *Egypt*, of which *Herodotus* and others, and some think *Isaiab* also speaks, as Sir *John Marsham* observes, *Isaiab x. 26, 28.* But as he was the first King of *Assyria* that invaded *Egypt*, so he went no further than to the Entrance of it, to *Pelusium*, which he could not take, and so at his Return broke his Faith with *Hezekiah*; and notwithstanding his Present, wherewith he pretended to be satisfied, laid Siege to *Jerusalem*.

And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the high way of the fullers field.] They took up their Head Quarters, as we now speak, by the Conduit or Canal, into which Water was derived from the upper Fish-pond or Pool; which was in the high Way to the Field, where the Fullers, after they had washed their Cloaths in that Pool, were wont to spread them.

Ver. 18. *And when they had called to the king,]* They were so bold as to demand Audience of the King himself, that they might treat with him in Person for a Surrender.

There came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joab the son of Asaph the recorder.] Though he would not vouchsafe to go himself, yet he sent his Major Domo, as they now speak, and his Secretary, or a Principal Doctor of the Law, and the Master of the Requests. For since the King of *Assyria* sent three Messengers, he thought fit to send as many. *Isaiab* indeed mentions only *Rabshakeh*, as sent by the King of *Assyria*: Which *Seder Olam Rabba* thinks is meant of the first Legation; but in the second when he besieged *Libnah* (*xix. 8.*) he joined *Tartan* and *Rabsharis* with him. It is very uncertain what Officer *Shebna* was; for he is said, *Isa. xxii. 15.* to be over the house, and the *LXX* sometimes make him *Treasurer*, sometimes *Scribe*, and Mr *Selden* thinks he might be *præfectus prætorio*. *Lib. de Succes. in Pontif. p. 142.*

Ver. 19. *And Rabshakeh said unto them,]* He was the chief Speaker, being an eloquent Man; and as the *Hebrew* Doctors will have it (whom *Procopius* follows) an Apostate *Jew*. Which is not altogether improbable; both because he could speak readily in the *Hebrew* Tongue, and when he blasphemed the divine Majesty, the King and his Nobles rent their Cloaths; which was not usual, unless he that uttered such blasphemous Words was an *Israélite*. Some think his Name imports that he was the principal Cup-bearer to the King of *Assyria*.

Speak ye now to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria,] He assumed to himself the Stile of the Great King, because of his great Conquests and large Dominions.

What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?] As much as to say, it was the greatest Folly to think any body could defend him from so great a King.

Ver. 20. *Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for the war:]* In Reason, he thought *Hezekiah* should not stand out

out against his Master, unless he had all things necessary for his Defence : But he did delude his People, if he told them, that he wanted neither Skill to manage War, nor Power to execute good Counsels.

Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me ?] He derides him, as full of vain Hopes ; and upbraids him with his Rebellion. Of which he was thought formerly to be guilty, but could not now be justly accused of it, when he had submitted to him with such a great Present. These are therefore Words of the highest Pride and Insolence.

Ver. 21. *Now behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt.*] He thought it probable he would seek for Succour from Egypt, being a neighbouring Country ; which would be ready to assist him, that they might be revenged of the King of Assyria for his late Invasion. But he represents Egypt as very weak, and utterly unable to help him ; being sorely crushed, though not destroyed, by Sennacherib.

On which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it : so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.] He represents the Power of Egypt to be as brittle as the Cane, or Reeds that grow on the Banks of the Nile (to which he seems to allude) on which if a Man leaned, they brake, and the Splinters run into his hand. Such is Pharaoh, saith he, a Man gets no Help, but Mischief by relying upon him ; as he doth who takes one of those Canes for his Staff to support him.

Ver. 22. *But if ye say unto me, We trust in the L O R D our God : is not that he whose high places and alters Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem ?*] This weak arguing proceeded from his Ignorance of that God and his Law, in whom Hezekiah trusted. Which made him call those Crimes, which were his greatest Virtues ; in prohibiting their offering Sacrifice in any other Place, but that which God appointed.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.*] He seems to challenge him to come out, and fight with his Master : And if he could give Security to make that Use of them, he would furnish him with two thousand Horses, provided he was able to find so many Men to sit upon them. Which are Words of the highest Contempt, and undervaluing of his Power. Or, the Meaning may be, he would lay a Wager with him, he could not find Men to sit upon so many Horses ; for few were good Horsemen in Judæa, where Horses were scarce.

Ver. 24. *How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my masters servants,*] Much less stand before his whole Army.

And put thy trust in Egypt for chariots, and horsemen ?] With which Egypt abounded above most other Countries ; who sometimes furnished the Israelites with Horses, but none like Egypt. For which Reason Moses forbids them to multiply Horses, lest it should cause them to return to Egypt, Deut. xvii. 16. and the Prophet reproves them severely for going to Egypt for

Help, and staying upon Horses, &c. Isa. xxxi. 1, 3.

Ver. 25. *Am I now come up without the L O R D against this place to destroy it ? the L O R D said unto me, Go up against this land and destroy it.*] If he had not been a Jew, yet he had learned the Name of their God ; and pretended his Master was come up against Jerusalem, by a Commission from him. Which were vain Words (as he calls Hezekiah's, ver. 20.) for there were none of his Prophets among the Assyrians. But perhaps he concluded from what the Assyrian King had done to Samaria, God intended he should do so to Jerusalem.

Ver. 26. *Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiab, and Shebna, and Joab, unto Rabshakeh, saying, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language (for we understand it) and speak not with us in the Jews language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.*] I suppose Eliakim perceived the People to be frightened with his big Words, and therefore intreated him, in the Name of the other Commissioners sent to treat with him, to speak no longer in the Jews Language, but in his own : For he was not sent to treat with the People, but with them who understood the Syrian Tongue very well.

Ver. 27. *But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master, sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words ? Hath he not sent me to the men that sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you ?*] To make them know, that he will reduce them to the greatest Extremity, if they do not submit unto him : For it is an Hyperbolical Speech, importing such Straits as were never known.

Ver. 28. *And Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews language, and spake, saying, Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria.*] He seems to have raised both himself, and his Voice higher, that he might be better heard by all.

Ver. 29. *Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to deliver you out of my hand.*] He repeats with the greatest Assurance, the Power of his King, and the Weakness of Hezekiah : Representing from thence, how they were deluded with empty Promises, if he persuaded them he should be able to preserve them.

Ver. 30. *Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the L O R D, saying, the L O R D will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.*] This was the highest Presumption to persuade them not to place their Hope in God ; as if his Master was stronger than he.

Ver. 31. *Hearken not to Hezekiah : but make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern :*] Having represented to them the Miseries unto which a Siege would reduce them, he invites them to a Surrender, upon advantageous Conditions.

Ver. 32. *Until I come, and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive, and of honey, that ye may live and not die : and hearken not to Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you,*

saying, *the LORD will deliver us.*] If they would seek the Favour of the King of *Assyria*; by making him a Present, and delivering themselves up to his Mercy; he promises they should be transported to a better Country than that to which the *Israelites* were carried: And in the mean Time, every one enjoy his own Possessions. But he was afraid *Hezekiah's* avowed Confidence in God would prevail with them, to trust to him for Deliverance, which makes him so often desire them not to depend upon that.

Ver. 33. *Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land, out of the hand of the king of Assyria?*] He argues very popularly and strongly, if his Supposition had been true, That the God of *Israel*, the God of the whole Earth (yea, of Heaven and Earth) was like those of all other Nations, who presided only over one Country, or City.

Ver. 34. *Where are the gods of Hamath, and Arpad?*] Those were Cities or Countries, which the King of *Assyria* had conquered.

Where are the gods of Sephervaim,] Mentioned before, xvii. 31.

Hena, and Ivah?] Some think these were the Gods of *Sephervaim*; which is confuted by the Place before-named. They were rather Cities, whose Gods could not protect them.

Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?] That is, have the Gods of *Samaria* been able to do more than the rest?

Ver. 35. *Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?*] He desires an Instance of one God, that had been able to save his Country, when his Master invaded it: And therefore it was best for them to yield their City up to him, since God himself could not preserve it unless he could do more than any other had done, which he concluded was unlikely. It must be acknowledged that *Rabshakeb* was an excellent Orator, as well as a Soldier; not inferior in Eloquence to *Julius Cæsar*.

Ver. 36. *But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.*] This was a very wise Order, because he might have made some Advantage by a sudden Answer; and it was no less pious: For *Hezekiah* believed God would answer for himself, not in Words, but in such Deeds as would demonstrate he was above all Gods.

Ver. 37. *Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiab, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joab the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeb.*] It was the Custom of the *Jews* to rend their Clothes, when they heard a Man blaspheme God's Name. And if we will believe them, when the Witnesses of a Blasphemy did but repeat the Words before the Judges, they rent their Clothes. Accordingly *Hezekiah*, when his Commissioners gave an Account of *Rabshakeb's* Words to him, he did so, xix. 1. But they have determined, that they were not bound to rend their Clothes, unless he were an *Israelite* that blasphemed. Therefore they have resolved, as I said before, that *Rabshakeb* was an Apostate *Israelite*. And this Custom was common to all

Nations (as appears from *Homer*, *Herodotus*, and *Virgil*) who expressed great Grief in this Manner.

C H A P. XIX.

Verse 1. **A**ND it came to pass when king *Hezekiah* heard it, that he rent his clothes,] See the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter.

And covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the *L O R D*.] He fasted and mourned, and went into the Temple to pray. Sometimes they put on Sackcloth next to their Skin, instead of a Shirt: But here it seems to signify only, that he was clothed in this vile Habit, in Token of his great Trouble and Sorrow.

Ver. 2. *And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the Scribe,*] See xviii. 18.

And the elders of the priests,] The principal Persons among the Priests.

Covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.] In the same mournful Habit to beg his Prayers to God for them.

Ver. 3. *And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, this day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke and blasphemy:*] They represent to him the great Straits in which they were, and the Reproaches cast upon them: And (which was worst of all) the Blasphemy they had heard against God.

For the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.] And the present Danger wherein they were of perishing, unless speedily relieved: Like that of a Woman, whose Child being fallen down, after many Throws, to the Place of Birth, she was so spent that she had no Strength left to bring it forth. Or, as *Procopius Gazæus* expounds it, *We are in Pain to bear such blasphemous Words, and have no Power to punish those wicked Wretches as they deserve.*

Ver. 4. *It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeb,*] So as to take Notice of them, and punish him.

Whom the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard:] Reprove him for the Words (as the *Targum* expounds it) which he had spoken against God. But *Lud. de Dieu* following *R. Solomon Jarchi*, thinks that the Word we translate *reprove*, signifies to *prove*, and by Arguments to demonstrate. And so refers it to *Rabshakeb* in this Manner: *It may be the LORD will hear all the words of Rabshakeb, whom the king of Assyria hath sent to reproach the living God: and that openly with a bold Face, fearing nothing, because all things succeeded according to their hearts desire.* And he saith, he shall wonder if this Sense displease any body.

Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.] That *Judah* might not be carried captive, as *Israel* had been.

Ver. 5. *So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.*] And delivered the foregoing Message to him.

Ver. 6. *And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with*

with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will send a blast on him,]* A penitential Blast, which destroyed his Army in one Night, *ver. 35.* Others translate it a Spirit; which is the same: For God sent an Angel, who smote them with that Pestilence.

And he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land,] The Report perhaps was renewed after that Stroke, that *Tirbakah* (of whom he had heard before, *ver. 9.*) was coming against him; which made him haste away, with the small Remains of his Army, to his own Country.

And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.] Which was fulfilled, *ver. 37.*

Ver. 8. *So Rabshakeh returned,]* Not with the Host that he brought with him (*xviii. 17.*) but he himself returned to give his Master an Account of what he had done; and left *Rabsharis* to carry on the Siege, and straiten the City, 'till he could come with the whole Army against it.

And found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.] Being unable, I suppose, to make himself Master of it.

Ver. 9. *And when he heard say of Tirbakah, king of Ethiopia, he is come out to fight against thee:]* Whether he fought with *Tirbakah* or no, and what the Success was, doth not appear. But it is to be noted, that there were two Countries called *Cush* (which we translate *Ethiopia*) one in *Africa* beyond *Egypt*; the other in *Arabia*, which is the *Ethiopia* here meant. For the King of the other was far off, and must have marched through *Egypt* before he could come to fight with *Sennacherib*. But this was near, and was able to raise a powerful Army, as appears by the vast Forces which *Zarab* brought against *Asa*, 2 *Chron. xiv. 9.* And thus 2 *Chron. xxi. 16*, as *Bochartus* observes, must necessarily be understood, where the *Arabians* whom God stirred up against *Jehoram*, are said to be near to the *Ethiopians*: Which cannot be true of those beyond *Egypt*. See his *Phaleg*, Lib. 4. Cap. 2.

He sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying,] Among which *Rabshakeh* was the chief.

Ver. 10. *Thus shall ye speake to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying,]* They could not come to the Speech of him; but sent him a Letter containing the Words following, *ver. 14.*

Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.] He had heard, I suppose, that *Hezekiah* declared he trusted in the LORD, and had Assurance from him, that he, the King of *Assyria*, should not prevail against him.

Ver. 11. *Behold, thou hast heard what the king of Assyria hath done to all lands, by destroying them utterly:]* The Letter is of the same Import with the former Message, presuming the God of *Israel* was like the Gods of other Countries, and had no more Power than they to preserve his Worshipers.

And shalt thou be delivered?] Such Questions imply a strong Denial, and therefore it is as much as to say, thou shalt be delivered no more than they were.

V O L. II.

Ver. 12. *Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed?]* He argues from the long Successes his Ancestors had enjoyed: None of the Gods, whose Countries they had destroyed, making Opposition to them for some Ages.

As Gozan, and Haran, and Rezepb, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar.] These were Places well known in those Days; there was a *Gozan* and *Hara* in *Media*, as *Bochartus* observes (Lib. 3. *Phaleg*. Cap. 14.) Where *Rezepb* was is uncertain, but *Ptolomy* mentions such a City in *Syria*, where *St Hierom* places *Thelasar*: And there were more Cities than one, in those Countries, called *Adana*, which is the same with *Eden*.

Ver. 13. *Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?]* Places before-mentioned, *xviii. 34.* Nothing can be further observed of this, but that the Fury of *Rabshakeh* increased: So that what he had uttered in Words, he now more deliberately set down in Writing: affirming boldly, that their God was a Deceiver, if he promised them Deliverance.

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.]* He could approach no nearer than to the outward Court of the Temple: Where at the Entrance of the Priests Court, he looked towards the Sanctuary, God's Dwelling-place, and laid this Letter before him.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, O LORD God of Israel, which dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth.]* Here he directly thwarts the blasphemous Opinion of the *Assyrians* before-mentioned (*xvii. 27. xviii. 35.*) that the God of *Israel* was but the particular Lord of that Country; not the universal Sovereign, which *Hezekiah* acknowledged him to be, because the Creator of the whole World.

Ver. 16. *LORD, bow down thine ear and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God.]* That is, sent *Rabshakeh*. He speaks in such Language as Men use, when they earnestly beseech others not to neglect their Supplication; but vouchsafe to attend, and to give a gracious Answer to them.

Ver. 17. *Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands,]* Do not boast of more than they have done.

Ver. 18. *And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of mens hands, wood and stone; therefore have they destroyed them.]* They had prevailed, he acknowledges, over their Gods, as well as over Men; but it was because they were not so good as Men, being meer Wood and Stone.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.]* He beseeches him to distinguish himself upon those Idols; by giving them such a Deliverance as might demonstrate to all the World that he was the living God (as he is often called) superior

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rior to all others, who were not able to save their Worshippers.

Ver. 20. *Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, that which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.*] He knew by the Spirit of Prophecy, that Hezekiah had represented his Case to God in the Temple; who bid *Isaiah* assure him his Petition was granted.

Ver. 21. *This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Sion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.*] These Words comprehend the whole City. For by the *Daughter of Sion* he means the People that inhabited the upper Part of the City, where the King's Palace stood: And by the *Daughter of Jerusalem*, the People of the lower Part of the City; and all that was not comprehended under the Name of *Sion*. They *shooked their heads at him*; which is the same with *despising*, and *laughing him to scorn*. For *shaking the Head* is the Posture of those that mock at others, *Psal. xxii. 7. St Matth. xxvii. 39.* He calls *Sion* a *Virgin*; because this Fortress, since *David* conquered it, had remained inviolable, and had never been taken by any Enemy. *Joash* indeed, King of *Israel*, took *Jerusalem*, and brake down the Wall of it (*xiv. 13, 14.*) but I think the Fort of *Sion* had never been taken.

Ver. 22. *Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice,*] So *Rabshakeb* did, *xviii. 28.*

And lift up thine eyes on high? As those do, who have haughty Thoughts of themselves; and overlook others with Contempt and Scorn, *Prov. xxi. 4.*

Even against the holy One of Israel.] God is called the *Holy One*, with Respect to his peerless Perfections; and the *Holy One of Israel*, as having a peculiar Respect to them above all People, who therefore should be defended by his Almighty Power.

Ver. 23. *By thy messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.*] This is an admirable Description of the Boastings of a King puffed up with great Success; and is as much as if he had said, What Place is there into which I cannot make my Way? When I have gone, even with my Chariots in great Number, to the Top of high Mountains; to *Lebanon* it self, through the most difficult Passages, which I have opened and plained for them? Who shall hinder me from cutting down its tallest Cedars and Fir-trees (perhaps he means their Princes and great Men) and when I have done, from marching and taking up my Quarters in the extreamest Borders of the Land, climbing up to the Top of *Carmel* (which was towards the *Mediterranean Sea*) or entering into all the fruitful Places of the Country, by making an entire Conquest of it. For so *Carmel* often signifies not a Mountain, but a fruitful Field, in the Language of this Prophet, *Isaiah x. 18. xvi. 10.*

Ver. 24. *I have digged and drunk strange waters,*] He brags that he had marched with his vast Army through strange Countries, and in the driest Places, where it was thought his Army would die with Thirst; but he digged till he found Water.

And with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.] This is commonly thought to signify, that he had gone dry-shod with his whole Army over great Rivers; whose Streams he turned another Way; and so had taken the strongest Fortresses surrounded with deep Waters, and great Ramparts. But *Bochartus* hath made a plainer Paraphrase upon these Words, which he thus translates, *I have dried up the rivers of Egypt.* As much as to say, *I will enter as easily into Egypt, in which you confide, as if, when I come thither, all the rivers wherewith it is invironed should be dried up.* See his *Hieroicoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 15. For the Hebrew Word *Mesor* (which we translate every where *besieged Places*, or *Defences*, or *Fortresses*) should rather be taken for the singular Number of *Mesoraim*, which by Contraction is called *Mitzraim*, that is, *Egypt*. And if this be allowed, the Sense then here is, as I said before, *I have dried up all the rivers of Egypt*: Which was the highest Vaunt he could make of his Power, and numerous Forces. Thus *Isaiah xix. 6. The Brooks of Defences shall be dried up*, is interpreted by *Kimchi*, *the rivers of Egypt shall be emptied and dried up.* And more plainly, *Micah vii. 12*; where *from the Fortress to the River* is so obscure, that it is not to be understood, but *from Egypt to Euphrates* is such clear Sense, that one cannot but think it should be so translated; for those were the Bounds of the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 25. *Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it, and of ancient times, that I have formed it?*] These are the Words of God, in Answer to those empty Boasts. But what is this to what I have done? Hast thou not heard how I brought my People dry-shod through the *Red-Sea*? How in ancient Times, I say, long before thou or thy Ancestors were born, I did this by my own Strength alone, without the Help of Nature or Art? For so the Word *Fatzar*, which we translate *formed*, is used *Gen. ii. 8.* and other Places.

Now I have brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.] And it is I that have now brought thee to do all these Things of which thou braggest. Thou couldst not have done one of them without my Leave: Who therefore permitted it, that I might punish those Cities by thy Hand, which I had devoted to Destruction. See *Isaiah x. 5, 6, 13, 14, 15.*

Ver. 26. *Therefore were their inhabitants of small power: they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb; as the grass on the house-tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.*] This was the Reason, that the People of those Cities whereof thou speakest (*ver. 12, 13.*) were so very feeble, and unable to oppose thee; because I delivered them into thy Hand.

Ver. 27. *But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.*] As

As much as to say, there are none of thy Motions hidden from me. For before thou camest from thy own Country, I knew with what Design thou marchedst out, and what thou hast done since wheresoever thou hast entred; and understand with what Rage and Fury thou art come up to destroy my Dwelling-place.

Ver. 28. *Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult is come up into my ears,]* I have heard the Noise thou makest with thy furious Threatnings, and with thy great Army which hath entred Judea.

Therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way that thou camest.] He compares his absolute Power over him to that of a Fisherman, who, let a Fish tumble ever so much in the Water, hath it fast by a Hook he hath fixed in his Nose; or to a Man upon a Horse or a Mule, whom he can turn which Way he please, when he hath a Curb in their Mouth. Even so saith God will I do with thee, draw thee back, press thou ever so much to compass thy Designs, into thy own Country, without any Success.

Ver. 29. *And this shall be a sign unto thee,]* This is spoken to Hezekiah.

Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same, and in the third year sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.] This was not a Sign of the Truth of his Prophecy, because it was to come after that was fulfilled; but a Token of God's extraordinary Favour and Love to them, when Sennacherib was gone; and they were in Fear of another Enemy, viz. a grievous Famine. For tho' he had trodden down or eaten up all the Corn with his Army, yet they should find sufficient left to maintain them this Year, which was the fourteenth of Hezekiah. And though the next were the Sabbatical Year, in which they were to let the Land rest, and neither sow nor reap; yet he promises enough should grow up of it self to sustain them, without any Culture, out of the Corn scattered in the former Year. And then in the sixteenth Year God assures them of Liberty to till their Land as they were wont, and that they should sow and reap, as in a Time of Peace, when no Enemy appeared, nor there was any Fear of any. But until the Corn sprung up and was ripe that Year, they lived upon what grew of it self in the Sabbatical Year, without Tillage. Which demonstrates the wonderful Providence of God over this People, in taking Care they should want nothing in those Years, without any Care of their own, if they believed in his Word. See *Levit. xxv.* where the Precept about this Sabbatical Year is delivered; and was observed by this People, from the first Conquest and Division of the Land of Canaan forty-seven Years after the coming out of Egypt. See Dr Alix, *Reflections on the Old-Testament*, Part 2. Chap. 1.

Ver. 30. *And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah, shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.]* He pursues the Metaphor from Corn that is sown in the Ground; signifying, that they should have

firm Possession of their own Country; and therein increase, and multiply, and flourish exceedingly.

Ver. 31. *For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape, out of mount Sion:]* For they who were now shut up in Jerusalem should be at Liberty; and they who escaped the Enemy's Fury in the Country, and fled thither for Refuge, should go out of Mount Sion, to their own Possessions.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.] His great Love to his own Honour, and to his People, shall do these Wonders; to vindicate his Glory from that Contempt which was cast upon it by Sennacherib.

Ver. 32. *Therefore thus saith the LORD, concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with a shield, nor cast a bank against it.]* He promises the King of Assyria should be so far from possessing himself of the City at this Time, that he should not assault it, by shooting so much as an Arrow in it: No, nor appear with his Army against it, or raise Bulwarks to besiege it. Or, as the Hebrews understand it, they should not cast a Stone out of their Engines against it. Rab-saris, I observed, ver. 8. continued the Siege; but whatsoever he did before, after this Message of Isaiah he made no Attempt upon them.

Ver. 33. *By the way that he came, by the same way he shall return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.]* He confirms what he said before, ver. 28.

Ver. 34. *For I will defend this city to save it,]* To preserve it from Destruction.

For my own sake, and for my servant Davids sake.] Upon which Account he had formerly spared them, when they deserved to be punished, 1 Kings xi. 12, 13.

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass that night,]* The Jews in the Gemara Sanhedrin (Cap. 11. N. 20.) say, that in the very Night after they set down before Jerusalem, and were so weary that they made no Attempt upon the City, this which follows fell out. Others think it was the same Night that Hezekiah received Sennacherib's railing Letter; which is more probable than the Opinion of our Dr Jackson, who will have it that it was the same Night, about two Years after. See upon the *Attributes*, Sect. 3. Cap. 26. However it was, the Blow was the more remarkable, because it was given in that very Night, wherein he had lifted up himself against the God of Heaven; or Belshazzar afterwards did, and had his fatal Stroke given him in like manner. See *Daniel v. 30.*

That the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians; an hundred fourscore and five thousand men: and when they arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.] By a Pestilential Disease, as Josephus calls it, λοιμικὸν νόσον, such a vast Number were suddenly cut off. It is a Question, whether this Destruction was made in the Army that besieged Libnah, or in that Host which Rabshakeh brought up against Jerusalem. Josephus thinks the latter; for it is probable Rabshakeh was come with his whole Host against Jerusalem, which before was straitned.

straitned by *Rab-saris*; and κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς πολιορκίας νύκτα, the first Night after they had begirt the City (as the *Jews* say, I observed, in *Sanhedrin*) the Angel of the L O R D made this great Slaughter among them. Lib. 10. *Antiq.* Cap. 2. where a little before, in the End of the first Chapter, he takes notice of an horrible Lye which *Herodotus* reports from the *Egyptians*; Who say their King, being also a Priest, by his Prayers to his God, brought this Destruction upon the *Affyrians*, as they lay before *Pelusium*: A great Army of *Rats* coming in the Night, and gnawing all their Bow-strings in Pieces, so that they could not fight. So studious they were to pervert the Truth, and corrupt the Sacred Story.

Ver. 36. *So Sennacherib king of Affyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.*] Being afraid that *Tirbakah* should come and destroy the Remainders of his broken Army, ver. 9.

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god,*] The LXX here call this God *Nesorach*; and upon *Isaiab*, where this Story is again told, *Afarach*. But what any of these Names signify, Mr *Selden* acknowledges he cannot tell, having in all his reading, never met with any thing that might explain it. But *Kircher* adventures to say it was the Image of a Ship, representing the Ark of *Noah*: the Reliques of which, *Josephus* tells us, some reported were in his Time, in the neighbouring Mountains of *Armenia*. And a later Writer, *Beyerus* (in his Additions to *Selden de Diis Syris*) thinks it signifies as much as the *Bird of Noah*, that is, a Dove, which was worshipped by the *Affyrians*: Or, as other conjecture (for they can do no more) this Word is derived from *Nes*, which in *Chaldee* signifies a Province, and *Rac*, which signifies a King; that is, *Jupiter* the King, and Conservator of that Province.

That Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword:] Which they might the more easily do, when he suspected no Danger. The Reason of it was, because in his Danger (we may suppose) he had vowed that he would offer them up unto his God. Therefore they sacrificed him, to prevent being sacrificed themselves. One of them seems to have been called after the Name of a God worshipped in those Countries. xv. 11, 31.

And they escaped into the land of Armenia;] Which was not far off; and where there were Mountains of very difficult Ascent, and inhabited by a Warlike People.

And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.] Who was the King that sent a Colony to people the Country of *Samaria* (as I observed before from *Ezra* iv. 2.) and the rather because he feared *Hezekiah* might take Possession of it, after such a Defeat as his Father *Sennacherib* had received. His Name is curtailed several Ways. For in the Book of *Tobit* he is called *Sarcedon*, i. 21. the first Syllable of his Name being cut off; and the LXX cut off the next, calling him *Aser-dan*; and *Isaiab* cuts off both, calling him *Sargon*, *Isaiab* xx. 1.

C H A P. XX.

Verse 1. **I**N those days was *Hezekiah* sick unto death:] This is set down after the Death of *Sennacherib*; but with this general Note only of the Time, wherein this Sickness fell out, in those days. Which, as *Primate Usher* observes in his *Annals*, doth not relate to what went just before (to the Time when the King of *Affyria* invaded the Land) as is evident from ver. 6. of this Chapter. Where he promises to add Fifteen Years to his Life, and also to deliver him from the King of *Affyria*. Which Deliverance therefore was after this Sickness, which was in the latter End of his Fourteenth Year; to which if we add Fifteen, they make up the whole Twenty-nine Years of his Reign.

And the prophet Isaiab the son of Amoz came to him, and said, Thus saith L O R D, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live.] That is, his Disease was in its own Nature mortal, and could not be cured by any Humane Remedy. Therefore he wished him to settle his Estate, and, as we speak, to make his Will; how all Things in his House should be disposed, when he was dead.

Ver. 2. *Then he turned his face unto the wall, and prayed unto the L O R D, saying,*] That is, towards the Wall of the Sanctuary, as the *Targum*, expounds it. See Dr *Hammond* upon *Acts* x. Annot. b. He thought as it was not beyond the Power of God to restore him, so he had not peremptorily decreed that he should die: But there was a tacit Condition in the Message (as in other Cases, *Jonah* iii. 4.) otherwise he would not have prayed to be spared.

Ver. 3. *I beseech thee, O L O R D, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight:*] He was not conscious to himself that he had omitted any thing which was to be done for the restoring the true Worship of God. In which he had been so exact, as to take away the High Places, which had continued ever since the Time of *David*, and none durst remove them. And therefore he presumed to beg that he might live, to settle and establish what he had begun to do.

And Hezekiah wept sore.] One Reason was, as many think, that he had not yet a Son to succeed him on the Throne. For he lived after this Fifteen Years; and when he died *Manasseh* was but Twelve Years old, who therefore was born after this Sickness.

Ver 4. *And it came to pass after Isaiab was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the L O R D came unto him, saying,*] It is doubtful whether we are to understand the middle of the Court of the King's House, or the middle of the City; for the one is in the Text, the other in the Margin of the *Hebrew* Bibles. But it is not material which we follow, for the Meaning is, that he was not gone far, before he was ordered to go back and carry a new Message, that his Prayer was heard.

Ver. 5. *Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the L O R D, the*
2 *God*

God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, and seen thy tears : behold I will heal thee ; on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the L O R D.] Recover his strength so fast, as to be able in three days Time to go to the Temple, and give God Thanks for his Cure. Which appears by this to have been miraculous.

Ver. 6. *And I will add unto thy days fifteen years,]* More than he could have lived according to the course of Nature.

And I will deliver this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake, and for my servant Davids sake.] For this Sickness was that Year when he threatened to destroy it. See upon ver. 1. It was a great Encouragement to faithful Obedience, that God so often mentions *David's* Services with such a kind Remembrance of them.

Ver. 7. *And Isaiah said, take a lump of figs. And they took, and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.]* There might be some natural Virtue in this Cataplasm, to soften and ripen an hard Tumor, as this seems to have been (some think a Plague-Sore) but it was a supernatural Power which made so speedy a Cure ; of which God used this as a Sign.

Ver. 8. *And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the L O R D will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the L O R D the third day ?]* He did believe, no doubt, what the Prophet said ; otherwise he would have been sharply reprov'd. But he made bold to desire a Confirmation of his Faith ; as good Men had done in other Cases : Particularly *Gideon*, who threw down the Altar of *Baal*, and cut down the Grove at God's Command, and blew the Trumpet, and gathered an Army, which were Arguments of a strong Faith ; and yet, after all this, desired a Sign from God, that God would deliver *Israel* by his Hand. *Judges* vi. 25, 34, 36, 37, &c.

Ver. 9. *And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the L O R D, that the L O R D will do the thing that he hath spoken : Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or back ten degrees ?]* Sometimes God, who is a free Agent, intending to convince Men by great Wonders that he is to be believed, is so graciously condescending, as to give them Leave to choose what they would have him do, or when ; that his Power may be the more notorious, and no room left for doubting. So he did with *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* viii. 9, 10. and with *Abaz*, *Isaiah* vii. 11. And here with his Son *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 10. *And Hezekiah said, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees : Nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.]* It was comparatively small, because to go forward was the natural Course of it ; but to return back was a Miracle, both in the Thing, and in the Manner of it.

Ver. 11. *And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the L O R D, and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Abaz.]* It is observed by many modern Interpreters, that there is not a Word here spoken concerning the Sun's going back ; but only of the Shadow upon the Dial ; which might by the Power of God go either forward or backward, the Sun still holding its Course, as

it was wont to do. And the *Degrees* or *Lines* in the Dial may signifie either Hours, or half Hours, or, as some think, Quarters. See *Vossius de Orig. & Progressu Idol.* Lib. 2. Cap. 9. Now the going back being three Times mentioned in this Chapter, and always spoken of the Shadow ; therefore they conclude the Miracle was wrought upon the Dial only ; not upon the very Body of the Sun. It is said indeed, in *Isa.* xxxviii. 8. *So the Sun returned ten Degrees ;* but they think that may be meant of the *Shadow of the Sun* (as it goes before) God so disposing the Rays of the Sun, and ordering the Light, that no Shadow should be projected, but where the Prophet foretold. This I thought fit to represent ; but must add that the ancient Jews, and Christians too, took the Words of *Isaiah* to signify that the Sun it self went back, and not merely the Shadow. Whom *Primate Usher* in his *Annals* follows, whose Words are these ; *The Sun and all the heavenly bodies went back ; and as much was detracted from the next night as was added to this day.* A. M. 4001, Which was done, I suppose, on a sudden, by the Power of God, and lasted not long before all was restored again to their usual Place ; so that no Change was made in the state of the Heavenly Bodies. But that there was some Change for the present, was observed both in the Northern Part of the World at *Babylon* (from whence *Merodach-Baladan* sent to enquire about this Wonder, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31.) and also in the Southern, in the Land of *Egypt* : As we may gather from a remarkable Passage in *Herodotus*, who tells us in his *Euterpe*, Cap. 1. 42. that the *Egyptians* had observed strange Alterations in the Motions of the Sun ; so that it had risen Four Times ἐξ ἡδέων out of its usual Course, ἐντεῦθεν νῦν δις κατὰδύεται, ἐντεῦθεν δις ἐπαντέλλαι, &c. it rising twice where it now sets, and setting twice where it now rises ; and yet, ἐδὲν τῶν κατ' Αἰγυπτίων ὑπὸ ταῦτα ἐτεροωδῆναι ; And yet no Change at all made among the *Egyptians*, by these things, neither in the Earth, nor the River, nor any thing else. That is a plain Evidence that their Neighbours (and many others, 'tis like) had heard of the unusual Motions of the Sun (though without any Alteration in the Heavenly Bodies, which were soon returned to their former Station) but had not a perfect Knowledge of them, or had corrupted their Knowledge ; for to those two mentioned in Scripture, in the Time of *Joshua* and *Hezekiah*, the *Egyptians* added two more, and make them to have been near the same Time. But the *Jews* themselves have been thus fabulous, who say in the Chapter *Chelek*, that the Day on which *Abaz* died was but two Hours long ; but now when *Hezekiah's* Life was prolonged, God restored those Ten Hours which were then wanting, and so brought Time even. See *Schickard* in his *Bechinah Happeruschim*, p. 122. They also believe this Miracle was wrought a little before Sun-set ; but that excellent Person, whom I have often mentioned, *Dr Alix*, thinks it evident it was before Noon, about our ten of the Clock.

Ver. 12. *At that time Berodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon,]* Who is called *Merodach-Baladan* in *Isa.* xxxix. 1. *Merodach* was the Name of an Idol among the *Babylonians*,

as *Baal* or *Bel* was another; together with *Adan* or *Adonis*, as Sir *J. Marsham* observes. *Josephus* calls him *Baldas*, and so doth *Berosus*. He was but a Tributary to the King of *Assyria*, 'till *Nebuchadnezzar* came to reign, who cast off the Yoke of *Assyria*, and made that Monarchy subject to him.

Sent letters] Some think to make a League with him against the King of *Assyria*: and it is likely to enquire about the wonder done in the land, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

And a present unto Hezekiah :] As the manner was when they sought any one's Friendship.

For he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.] And therefore in these Letters, I suppose, he also congratulated his happy Recovery to Health.

Ver. 13. *And Hezekiah bearkned unto them,*] He gave them a friendly and benign Audience (as *Abarbinel* explains it) being glad at their coming, as *Isaiah* tells us (xxxix. 2.) because he knew them to be Enemies to *Sennacherib*. And the Words seem to import that they came about some weighty Business, to which he consented.

And shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures :] He was so pleased, or rather transported with Joy, at the Honour the King of *Babylon* had done him, that he not only gave them a gracious Audience, as was said before, but ordered his Officers to shew them all the Rarities he had in his Treasures. For though his Country had been lamentably harrassed by the King of *Assyria* and he had endeavoured to appease him with great Gifts (xviii. 14, 15.) yet there were many good Things remaining in *Jerusalem*; and great Presents had been made to *Hezekiah*, since the Stroke from Heaven upon *Sennacherib's* Army. 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. The precious Ointment here mentioned, is called by *Kimchi* and other Hebrew Doctors *Apharsemon*; which they say was the true *Balsam*; not to be found any where but near to *Fericho*.

There was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominions, that Hezekiah shewed them not.] There were other valuable Things in other Parts of the Realm, besides those in his own Palace at *Jerusalem*, which he thought worth their seeing, and therefore ordered his Officers to shew them to these Embassadors.

Ver. 14. *Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? And from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.*] He answers to the last Part of *Isaiah's* Question, but not a Word of the first, what their Business with him was? And he calls that a far Country from whence they came (though it was not very remote) to express the Honour that was done him, by a Prince at such a Distance from him.

Ver. 15. *And he said, What have they seen in thy house?*] He knew well enough what they had seen; but had a mind to hear whether *Hezekiah* would confess the Truth, or excuse his Folly.

And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in my house have they seen: there is nothing among

my treasures, that I have not shewn them.] He honestly relates the Truth; being insensible of how dangerous a Piece of Vanity he had been guilty; in shewing Strangers those Treasures, which he might well think would invite them to endeavour to make themselves Masters of them.

Ver. 16. *And Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the L O R D.*] How he resents this Action. Which was the more blameable, because he had lately received such great Benefits from God, and seen such an astonishing Wonder as he wrought for the Confirmation of his Faith; whereby he should have been moved not to glory in any thing, but the Goodness of God to him; nor confide in the Friendship of great Princes, but only in the Power of the Almighty.

Ver. 17. *Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up unto this day.*] There had been several great Kings in *Judah* who had overcome many Enemies, and got great Spoils; some Remainers of which were still in their Stores: But *Isaiah* foretels, all should be carried away to that very Place, from whence he had been complemented by those Embassadors.

Shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the L O R D.] The most pertinent Observation that I can make upon these Words, is that of Dr *Jackson* (in his *Answer to John's Question*) where he saith, that whosoever will consider the State of things in this Time, and the small Power which the *Babylonians* now had, in respect of their mighty Neighbour the King of *Assyria* (whom the *Jews* had Reason to fear above all other Princes) the Accomplishment of this Prophecy of *Isaiah* was according to human Conjecture far more unlikely and improbable, than if a Man should in the last Age, have taken upon him to foretel, that the Duke of *Saxony*, or some such Prince in *Germany*, should conquer *France* and *Spain*, and lead them Captive to *Dresden*. But the Word of the L O R D stands fast for ever; and *Isaiah* was proved an Hundred and twenty-five Years after to be a true Prophet.

Ver. 18. *And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away,*] That is, his Posterity descended from him.

And they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.] Wait upon him, as his Servants, xxiv. 15. This was partly fulfilled in *Daniel* and his Companions, Dan. i. 1.

Ver. 19. *Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the L O R D which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?*] As if he had said, Thanks be to God, it is no worse; let him do his Pleasure. Have I not Reason to be thankful, if according to his promise he deliver me from the King of *Assyria* (ver. 6.) and not only prolong my Days, but let me enjoy firm Peace, and true Religion as long as I live? Some take this to be a careless Speech, as if he did not concern himself what became of his Posterity, so he himself did live happily. But this is inconsistent with such a pious Mind as he had; which no doubt, was sensible of the Vanity and Pride for which the Prophet reproved him; and submitted to the

the Punishment of it; which might have been immediately inflicted, if God had not been very merciful unto him.

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city,]* If he brought Water into the City by private Passages, whereby the Enemy was deprived of the Benefit of it, while the City enjoyed it (as *Grotius* understands it) it was certainly a Work of admirable Contrivance. See 2 Chron. xxxii. 3.

Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?] The same great Person here observes, that the book of *Chronicles* spoken of here, and in other Places, were *Journals*, as these Books were *Annals*. Out of which *Journals* *Ezra* took many more Passages, in his Book of the *Chronicles*, not omitting what he had written in these *Annals*.

Ver. 21. *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.]* Here is no mention of his Burial with his Fathers in the City of *David*: But *Ezra* in 2 Chron. xxxii. 33, tells us, they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of *David*, and that all the People did him honour at his death.

C H A P. XXI.

Ver. 1. **M***anasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Hephzibah.]* The Years wherein he was Captive in *Babylon* (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.) must be comprehended in this Number.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.]* He set up the Gentile Worship again: For being young, he was easily drawn aside by the Princes and Nobles, who never heartily joined in *Hezekiah's* Reformation; but were, in all Probability, displeased at it; and so revolted as soon as he was dead. For one cannot conceive how such a sudden Change should be made in Religion, and such gross Idolatry restored, but from the general Corruption of the Great Men, who had the Management of this young King.

Ver. 3. *For he built up the high places, which Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the hosts of heaven, and served them.]* The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, as *Procopius Gazæus* explains it.

Ver. 4. *And he built altars]* To the Gods of the Neighbouring Nations.

In the house of the LORD,] In the very Sanctuary it self; for the outward Courts are mentioned in the next Verse.

Of which the LORD said, in Jerusalem will I put my name.] Where God appointed, that he himself alone should be worshipped, 2 Sam. vii. 13.

Ver. 5. *And he built altars for all the host of heaven, in the two courts of the house of the LORD.]* The inner Court, which was that

of the Priests; and the outward, which was that of the People, were profaned, together with the Sanctuary.

Ver. 6. *And he made his son pass through the fire,]* In 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6. it is said he caused his Children to pass through the Fire; which was a most abominable Practice, strictly forbidden by *Moses* upon Pain of Death, *Levit.* xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3.

And observed times, and used incantments,] See *Levit.* xix. 22. *Deut.* xviii. 10, 11.

And dealt with familiar spirits, and wizards:] See *Levit.* xix. 31.

He wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.] For there were none before him, who committed such things as these; which were the highest Provocations of God's Displeasure.

Ver. 7. *And he set a graven image of the grove which he had made, in the house]* The Hebrew Words in this Place are *Pesel haasherab*, which our *Selden* hath well resolved (by comparing this with other Texts) signifies a Wooden Image of *Ashtaroth*, or *Astarte*. *Syntagm.* 2. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. For *Baal* and *Astarte* were chief Gods of the *Sidonians*, whose Worship was introduced by *Ahab*; whom *Manasseh* imitated, ver. 3.

Of which the LORD said unto David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever.] I observed before what God said to *David*, and what he said to *Solomon* is recorded, 1 Kings viii. 29. ix. 3. But *Manasseh* endeavoured to make the Name of the God of *Israel* to be forgotten; by placing other Gods in his House.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them.]* This Promise was included in the Choice God made of *Jerusalem* to fix his Dwelling-place there Which was a Security to them against all their Enemies, if they proved obedient to him.

Ver. 9. *But they hearkened not:]* They had always been a rebellious People.

And Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations, whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.] But in his Reign their Wickedness was grown to such an Height, that it exceeded all that the People of *Canaan* had done; whom God expelled to make Room for the *Israelites*. For he broke all the Laws of *Moses*, and worshipped more Idols than they did. We never read of *Horses* consecrated to the Sun 'till his Time (See xxii. 11.) who in all Probability brought in that Idolatry.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying,]* *Abarbinel* makes Account that *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Nabum*, and *Habakkuk*, all prophesied in his Days. And some think *Obadiab* also, and *Isaiab*: Who, as the Jews say, was sawn asunder by him.

Ver. 11. *Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him,]* The whole People of *Canaan* are comprehended under the Name of *Amorites*; who

were the most eminent of all the Seven Nations. See *Gen.* xv. 16.

And hath made Judah also to sin with his idols:] They were too much inclined to Idolatry, by the long Corruptions that had been among them; but he made them far worse than otherwise they would have been. For as *Jeremiah* charges them, in the next Reign but one, according to the number of their cities were their gods, and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem, they set up altars to that shameful thing, to burn incense to Baal. *Jerem.* xi. 13.

Ver. 12. *Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.]* The Report of it shall strike Terror and Horror into Men, as *Procopius Gazæus* expounds it. See *1 Sam.* iii. 11.

Ver. 13. *And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria,]* A Metaphor from those who set out Mens Lots and Portions, by drawing a Line to divide them. And is as much as to say, he would give to Jerusalem the same Measure that he had done to Samaria; that is, pull it down to the Ground; consume some of them by Famine, others by the Sword, and carry the rest into Captivity, as the same *Procopius* glosses.

And the plummet of the house of Ahab:] As they imitated his Sin, so they should have his Punishment; whose House was utterly destroyed. It seems to be a Metaphor from Builders, who measure with a Line and a Plummet what Part of a Building shall stand, and what be demolished.

And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down.] That is, leave no more People in it, than you see any thing in a Dish after it is emptied, and wiped, and turned upside down; as the Manner is when it is perfectly cleansed. So the Meaning is, I will cleanse her of all her Inhabitants, and leave none remaining. The Hebrew Word which we translate *Dish*, the LXX translate ὁ ἀλάβαστρος, an Alabaſter Box of precious Ointment, as the Chaldee translates it *Seluſta*, in which the Greek Word λίζυθον lurks (as the illustrious *Spanhemius* observes upon *Callimachus* his Hymn in *Palad.* ver. 13.) signifying that Jerusalem was once in high Esteem with God, like a precious Ointment; but having lost its Savour, he would reject her as a Man doth such Ointment, when it is nothing worth.

Ver. 14. *And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance,]* That is, Judah, who alone was left when the ten Tribes were gone.

And deliver them into the hands of their enemies, and they shall become a prey, and a spoil unto all their enemies;] As their Brethren, the Children of Israel, had been.

Ver. 15. *Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger from the day that their fathers came out of Egypt, even unto this day.]* God now intended to punish them for all their former Rebellions, ever since they were a People; which *Manasseh* had compleated, whose Sin was so great, that it is sometimes mentioned as the sole Cause of their Captivity. See *Jerem.* xv. 4.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, Manasseh shed innocent blood very much,]* Upon which Words *Procopius Gazæus* thus glosses, *He chiefly destroyed those who opposed themselves to his Impiety, and denounced the divine Anger against him* (that is, the Prophets.) *They say he caused the Prophet Isaiah to be sawed in sunder.* So the Jews say in the *Babylonian Talmud*, in the Treatise *Jebamoth*, and *Justin Martyr* in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, and *St Hierom* upon *Isa.* xx. 27. Nay, the Words of the Apostle, *Heb.* xi. 37. ἐπὶ σιδήρει are commonly referred to this, as *Primate Usher* observes in his *Annals*, ad A. M. 3306.

'Till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another,] Top-full, as we speak. For it is a Metaphor from Measures wet or dry, when they are filled up to the Brim.

Beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.] That is, besides his abominable Idolatry.

Ver. 17. *Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]* All that he did in his Captivity, and after, were written in the *Journals*, from whence *Ezra* took what we find in *2 Chron.* xxxiii. 11, &c.

Ver. 18. *And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.]* Some think this was the Place where *Uzziab* was buried, *2 Chron.* xxvi. 23. and that he chose to be buried here, as unworthy because of his manifold Sins (of which he repented) to be laid in the common Sepulchre of the Kings of Judah.

Ver. 19. *Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem:]* Which is the Number of Years to which the Sons of those Kings arrived, who provoked God to Anger; as some of the Jews observe in the Son of *Jeroboam*, the Son of *Baasha*, and the Son of *Ahab.* *1 Kings* xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51.

And his mothers name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.]

Ver. 20. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did.]* He imitated him in all Things but in his Repentance, as is observed, *2 Chron.* xxxiii. 23.

Ver. 21. *And he walked in all the ways that his father walked in, and served the idols that his fathers served, and worshipped them:]* For he was bred up in Idolatry, and solemnly consecrated by his Father to the Service of *Molech*, ver. 6.

Ver. 22. *And he forsook the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.]* As *Hezekiah*, and *Jotham*, and other of his pious Ancestors had done. There are two Doctors also in the Chapter *Chelek*, the one of which saith, he burnt the Book of the Law; the other, that he lay with his own Mother.

Ver. 23. *And the servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.]* As he forsook God, whose Servant he ought to have been; so his Servants forsook him, and murdered him in his own Palace.

Ver. 24. *And the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon,]* It was

was a thing of such pernicious Example to kill their King, though very bad, that the People would not suffer it to go unpunished.

And the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.] The common People seem to have been better disposed than the Great Men; who, 'tis probable, were engaged in the Conspiracy against Amon. But it is not likely that the common People took upon them to constitute a King, but their Elders and great Men met, together with the People, upon such Occasions as this, to declare to whom the Right of Succession belonged. Therefore by the *People of the Land*, must be meant the People assembled in the common Council of the Nation.

Ver. 25. *Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?* There is nothing said here of him, but that he was a gross Idolater: Which was not the Ground of the Conspiracy against him; but it is likely was related in the Book here mentioned.

Ver. 26. *And he was buried in his sepulchre, in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.]* He was buried either in his Father's Sepulchre; or in one that he made for himself in the same Place.

C H A P. XXII.

Verse 1. *J*osiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem, and his mothers name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath.] Who it is likely was a good Woman, and took Care to instil early good Principles into him.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand, or to the left.]* In him was verified the Words of Solomon, Prov. xx. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.* For when he had reigned Eight Years, while he was yet young, as Ezra observes, he began to reform all Abuses in Religion, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3, &c.

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying,]* This was in the Eighteenth Year of his Reign, not of his Age, as we are told, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 4. *Go up to Hilkiab the high priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the LORD,]* He ordered him to give him an exact Account of what Money had been offered by pious People, for the Reparation of the House of the LORD; as had been done in the Reign of Jehoshaphat, xii. 4, &c.

Which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people.] They were the Levites, as we learn from 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9.

Ver. 5. *And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work, which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house,]* They intrusted certain Persons with the Money, who were to oversee the Work (whose Names

are recorded in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.) and they delivered it to the Workmen to buy Materials for the Reparation of the House, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 6. *Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewen stone to repair the house.] Builders* (as distinguished from *Carpenters* and *Masons*) were such as laid the Timber and the Stone together, which the other had prepared.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.]* They were Men of such approved Honesty (like those in the Days of Jehoshaphat, xii. 15. that there was no need to call them to an Account, how they laid out the Money.

Ver. 8. *And Hilkiab the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD: and Hilkiab gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.]* The Book of Deuteronomy, saith Procopius Gazæus. But it was rather the whole Book of the Law written by Moses; that Authentick Copy which by God's Command was laid up in the most holy Place, Deut. xxxi. 24, &c. About which the Hebrew Doctors made great Difficulties in their Explication of this Place, particularly R. Lipman in his *Nitzacon*, out of which Hottinger hath alledged a long Passage concerning this Matter in his *Historica Ecclesiastica* N. T. §. 16. Pars. 4. p. 137. Where he justly thinks it a Wonder that Josiah should so early fear God, and begin to reform Religion, if he had never seen the Book of the Law before this Time. And how should the People have kept such a Passover, and the Priests been so well instructed in the Rites of it, this very Year. (2 Chron. xxxiv. 19.) For the Copies of the Book now found could not be so soon made and dispersed every where, as to teach them these Things. It is most likely therefore, nay certain, that though this was the Original Book, yet the Jews had many Copies of the Law among them, though some of them perhaps imperfect, or corrupted. For they report that Manasseh blotted the Name of JEHOVAH out of all the Books he could find. Hilkiab therefore rejoiced that he had found the Original, by which all might be corrected. Which had been hid, it is probable, from the impious Fury of their idolatrous Kings, in some secret Place of the Temple; where it was now found, when they were about to repair it: And the finding it at this very Time, when Josiah was making a Reformation of Religion, could not but be looked upon as a remarkable Providence; which very much affected him, as we read afterwards.

Ver. 9. *And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought the king word again, saying, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD.]* He gives him an Account, that they had executed his Commands, given him ver. 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 10. *And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiab the priest hath delivered me a book: And Shaphan read it before the king.]* Some Part of it. It is said indeed, in 2 Chron.

xxxiv. 30. that *they read in the ears of the people all the Book of the Law.* But that was done afterwards, and was done by Parcels, not all at one Time. And so it follows here, xxiii. 2. that *Josiah* read, that is, caused some by his Order to read, all the Words of the Book of the Covenant that was found in the House of the LORD, in the Ears of all the People.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.*] Being very much affrighted when he heard the dreadful Threatnings against the Transgressor of the Law, read out of the Book of *Deuteronomy*. At which the Book opened, either by the special Providence of God, or by the Design of *Shaphan*, who had read the Book before he brought it to the King, ver. 8. The *Hierusalem Talmud*, and from thence *Abarbinel* saith, that he happened to read the Place where the Punishment of their King is denounced, *Deut.* xxviii. 36. or, that he observed the Time drew near, when the Punishments God threatened would be inflicted, for their long Offences against this Law. According to what the King himself here saith, ver. 13. *Great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, &c.* By all which it is plain, the King had not written a Copy of the Law with his own Hand, according to the Command, *Deut.* xvii. 8. Difuse often cancels the most excellent Laws. For it is too probable they had a long Time neglected also to read the Law publicly every Seventh Year. *Deut.* xxxiv. 9, 10.

Ver. 12. *And the king commanded Hilkiab the priest, and Abikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiab a servant of the kings, saying,*] *Shaphan* was a Servant of the Kings, being Secretary, or some such Officer; but *Asaiab*, I suppose, was one that waited on his Person, and was always about him.

Ver. 13. *Go ye and enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people,*] Of *Jerusalem*.

And for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkned unto the words of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us.] I suppose he sent them to enquire whether there were any Hopes his Anger might be appeased; and by what Means.

Ver. 14. *So Hilkiab the priest and Abikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiab, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harbas, keeper of the wardrobe*] It is certain that both *Jeremiah* and *Zephaniah* prophesied in the Reign of *Josiah*; therefore it may seem strange that they did not resort to one of them. Of which *Abarbinel* gives this Account, That *Jeremiah* was at this Time absent from *Jerusalem*, being gone to convert the Ten Tribes; or rather, being at his own House in *Anathoth*. And the same he supposes of *Zephaniah*, that he was not near at hand; and therefore they went to *Huldah* who lived at *Jerusalem*; and the rather, as some suppose, because Women are more inclined to Pity and Compassion than Men. But this is an absurd Reason, as *Abarbinel* well observes: For the Prophets did not speak according to their own Inclinations, but as God

dictated to them. The *Jews* have a Tradition in *Massecheth Megillah*, that eight Prophets descended from *Rahab*, whereof *Huldah* was one. And *Kimchi* upon this Place saith, Our Doctors write, that three prophesied in the Days of *Josiah*; viz. *Jeremiah* in the Streets or Villages, *Zephaniah* in the Synagogues, and *Huldah* among the Women.

(Now she dwelt in *Jerusalem* in the college) and they communed with her.] The Hebrew Word *Mishneh*, which we translate College (and which the Targum takes to signify a School) is in the Margin of our Bibles translated the second Part. For there were three Walls about *Jerusalem*, as *Abarbinel* observes. Within the first of which lived Artificers, and the common People; within the second, the better Sort, the wise Men, Prophets, and Prophetesses lived; and within the third was the Mountain of the LORD, as they speak. Now of the middle Part of *Jerusalem* they think the holy Writer here speaks, in which *Huldah* dwelt.

Ver. 15. *And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, tell the man that sent you unto me,*] She speaks in the Prophetical Stile, and with great Boldness tells them the plain Truth.

Ver. 16. *Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.*] All the Plagues threatened in *Deuteronomy* xxviii. and other Places.

Ver. 17. *Because they have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands: therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.*] This was the Answer to the King's Enquiry; that the Decree of God was peremptory, and irresistible, against *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for their Extermination; and he adds the Reason thereof.

Ver. 18. *But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard;*] As far as they concerned his Person.

Ver. 19. *Because thy heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thy self before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and went before me: I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.*] Here are four Tokens, as some observe, of a true Repentance and Conversion unto God, First, Softness of Heart; which is opposed to that Hardness which arises from Unbelief of God's Threatnings; because Faith makes Men tenderly affected with them. Secondly, Great Humility, arising from a Sense of his Unworthiness of any Mercy. These two were inward: The other were outward Tokens of this inward Sense; which were Rending his Cloaths, and Weeping for his own, and for the publick Offences; which moved God to take some Pity upon him, though he resolved to destroy the Nation.

Ver. 20. *Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers,*] The Time-hasting for their utter Destruction, God would let him live but a short Time; which was a Mercy to him, that he

he might not see the Miseries that were coming upon them.

And thou shalt go unto thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.] Though he was slain in Battle (xxiii. 29.) yet he went to his grave in peace; because, as the next Words explain it, he did not live to see the Calamities which were inevitably threatened to come upon the Nation; but left his Kingdom in a peaceable Condition. For the Egyptians who slew him, gave them no long Disturbance, and the Babylonians were not yet ready to come up against them.

And they brought the king word again.] Who immediately set himself to do all the Good he could for his Time; though he could not prevent the Evil that was coming.

C H A P. XXIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah, and of Jerusalem.] Whom he acquainted with what he intended to do; and, I suppose, had their Consent, which gave the greater Authority to what follows.

Ver. 2. *And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the prophets,]* Jeremiah and Zephaniah were the principal Prophets; and, it is likely, there were many more who are not mentioned.

And all the people both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant] He ordered some to read (xxii. 10.) in several Places, so that all might hear; for it is not likely that one Man's Voice could reach so great a Multitude.

Which was found in the house of the LORD.] And some of the Jews say, was found lying open at that very Place, where those Words presented themselves, Deut. xxxviii. 36, which awakened the King to cause all the Law of God to be read to them.

Ver. 3. *And the king stood by a pillar,]* Unto which his Throne adjoined; wherein the King was placed when he came to the Temple, as the Hebrew Doctors will have it. The King's Seat, saith Jacob Juda Leo, was in the Court of the Israelites, at the Entrance into the Court of the Priests, by a Marble Pillar. There he sat when he came into the Temple to worship God. There Joash was made King by Jehoiada (xi. 14.) there Hezekiah read before the LORD the blasphemous Letter which the King of Assyria sent him (xix. 14.) and there Josiah now made a Covenant with God that he would serve him. See Vitringa Proleg. ad L. De Synag. Veteri. Cap. 4.

And made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes,] That is, all his Laws of all Sorts.

With all their heart, and with all their soul,] He made this Covenant in his own Name, and in the Name of all the People, whom he engaged faithfully to God's Service.

To perform the words of the covenant, that were written in this book: and all the people stood to the

covenant.] They gave their Consent to the Covenant; standing before the LORD as he did, and not stirring from the Place where he pronounced it unto them.

Ver. 4. *And the king commanded Hilkiab the high priest,]* It was very proper to commit the Reformation of the House of God to the High Priest; and those who ministered under him. Some will have Hilkiab to be the Father of Jeremiah, as is asserted by Greg. Abulpharagius, in his *Histor. Dynastarum*, p. 68. Which is an Error; for Jeremiah was a Priest of Anathoth, whither Abiathar was banished, of the Seed of Ithamar, from whom it is likely he was descended, 1 Kings ii. 26.

And the priests of the second order,] They that were under the High Priest; especially the Sagan (as the Targum here hath it) who was the Vicar of the High Priest, and stood at his Right Hand when he officiated, as the Jews tell us, in *Joma*, where they say a Man could not be made a High Priest, unless he had been first a Sagan.

And the keepers of the door,] Whom the Chaldees call *Amarcelim*; which Word we find xii. 10. Where the Targum expounds it, *Priests that were Treasurers*: That is, such Levites as had the Custody of the sacred Money, which was for the Repair of the Temple. And the Hebrew Phrase is not much different, *the Keepers of the Thresholds*; that is, the Entrance into those Chambers (as Hottinger thinks) wherein were kept such Things as were of publick Use in the Temple. Of which there were seven; wherein the Priests Garments were laid up, and other such like things.

To bring forth out of the temple of the LORD, all the vessels that were made for Baal.] The Word we translate *Vessels* or *Instruments*, signifies all the various Furniture belonging to Baal, and the rest of the false Gods, which served either for offering of Incense, or Sacrifices, or the Vestments of the Priests, &c.

For Baal,] Who was the principal Idol, whose Worship Abab first introduced, and Manasseh restored after Jehu had abolished it, as was said before, xxi. 3.

And for the grove,] I observed before, that by a Grove is meant the Image or Idol of the Grove; which Abab had brought in also. See there xxi. 3, 7, and here below, ver. 6.

And for all the host of heaven:] That is, the Planets, and the rest of the Stars, which the Sabæans, and Chaldeans, and other eastern People worshipped. Whom the Jews impiously imitated though they had been taught in the very Beginning of their Law, that the Sun, the Moon, and all the Stars, were all created by their God.

And he burnt them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them into Beth-el.] Which Place (where, as Kimichi speaks, was the very Foundation of Idolatry) he polluted and profaned, by casting this Filth there; that they who were wont to worship the Calves in that Place, might avoid it, and not come near it.

Ver. 5. *And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and*

and in the places round about Jerusalem:] These idolatrous Priests are called *Cbemarim* in the Hebrew; because they were cloathed in black Garments (as *Kimchi* gives the Reason both upon this Place, and upon *Zephan. i. 4.*) Whereas the Priests of the Most High were cloathed in White; especially those whose Genealogy was not questioned. They indeed who could not make out their Descent, were cloathed in black Habit, to distinguish them from undoubted Priests: And so were they who had any Defect or Blemish in their Body, as appears from the *Talmud* in *Middoth*. And indeed it is certain, that they among the Heathen who sacrificed to the infernal Gods, were cloathed with such Vestments, as appears by *Canida* in *Horace, Lib. 1. Sat. 8.* and *Medea* in *Apollonius Rhodius, Lib. 3. ver. 861*; from whence some think they had the Name of *μελανηρόεσι*, which we find in some ancient Inscriptions. And thus the Egyptians bewailed *Osiris*, all which was suitable to their mighty Sacrifices; wherein they were sad for the Absence of the Sun, who was meant by *Osiris*, as *Gilbertus Cuperus* observes in his *Harpocrates*, p. 129. And here now we have found the Original of these *Cbemarim*, Priests cloathed in Black. For it was a black Ox which represented *Osiris* among the Egyptians, and it was covered *ἱματίῳ μέλανι βυσσίνῳ* with a black Silk Garment; from whence, in all Likelihood, the Priests came to be so cloathed.

Them also that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon,] Here *Baal* is distinguished from the Sun; and therefore signifies the same with *Belus*, who was a deified King: And indeed it is highly probable, that not only *Baal*, but *Moloch*, and *Adonis*, were the Names only of some very potent Kings, who were adored when they were dead, and in Time were thought to be real Gods.

And to the planets, and to all the hosts of heaven.] The Hebrew Word *Mazaloth*, which the LXX pronounce *Mazuroth*, it thought by *Procopius Gazæus* to be the Name of a Star, and most likely the Evening Star: Which others take to signify a Constellation, as we translate it in the Margin; or all the twelve Signs. For the Jewish Astronomers call the Zodiack, *Ophan hamazaloth*, the Circle of the Signs.

Ver. 6. And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron,] By the Grove, as I have observed before, is meant the Image of the Grove, or in plainer Words *Astharoth*: For so *Procopius Gazæus* saith, that where the LXX translate this Word the Grove, others render it *Ἀσθήρωθ*, or *Ἀσάρωθ*; that is, *Ἀσάρτη* or *Venus*. For τῆς Ἀφροδίτης τὸ ἔδανον ἐνδον ἔστησαν ἐν τῷ θείῳ νεῷ, they had set up the Statue of Venus in the Temple of God. See *Selden Syntag. 2. De Diis Syris, Cap. 2.*

And burnt it at the brook Kidron, and stamp it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.] Which by the Law were impure, and unclean; and such he declared these Ashes to be, and actually made them unclean, that none might touch them; much less gather them up as sacred Reliques. And so *Kimchi* expounds this Place, he brought forth the wooden Statue of *Diana*,

which *Manasseh* had placed there (*xxi. 7.*) and having burnt it and stamped it to Powder, scattered the Ashes on the Graves of the Idolaters, in Detestation and Contempt of their Idolatry.

Ver. 7. And he broke down the house of the Sodomites, which were by the house of the LORD,] From this some gather they were come to such an Height of Wickedness, that there were those among them who exposed their Bodies to be abused contrary to Nature, in Honour of those filthy Deities which they worshipped. For these publick Houses were near the Temple of the LORD; and therefore these were Persons consecrated to Impurity, contrary to *Deut. xxiii. 17.* See *1 Kings xiv. 24.* And so the ancient Interpreters here understand corporal Filthiness: Only the *Chaldee* translates it, the Houses of Things consecrated to Idols. *R. Solomon Jarchi* thinks it probable, that among those who worshipped the Statues of the Moon or Venus, there were those who prostituted themselves to filthy Mixtures. But Mr *Selden* by *Kedeschim* (which we translate *Sodomites*) understands the Priests of *Astarte*, whom *St Hierom* upon *Hosea iv.* calls *exsecratos*, upon Pretence of greater Purity, depriving themselves of those Parts that serve for Procreation of Children.

Where the women wove hangings for the grove.] For *Asherah*, or *Astarte* before mentioned; as *Selden* expounds it in the fore-named Place. These Hangings or Curtains, encompassed the Image, and made a kind of House for it, as the Hebrew Word imports, which the Greeks called *καίονες* and *ναΐδια*, little Temples, or Habitations. Into those Tents the Worshipers went, and there committed all manner of Lewdness; for they had not arrived to such a Degree of Impudence, as not to seek for Privacy in their Filthiness.

Ver. 8. And he brought all the priests cut of the cities of Judah,] Would not suffer them to dwell there, to corrupt the People.

And defiled the high places where the priests had burnt incense,] He made them, saith *Kimchi*, Receptacles of Impurity, by casting dead Carcasses there, and other such like unclean Things; that so he might remove out of the Peoples Hearts all Idolatry: For where sweet Odours were wont before to be, there was nothing but Stench.

From Geba to Beer-sheba,] That is, throughout the whole Country; for *Geba* was in the Northern Parts, and *Beer-sheba* in the Southern. See *1 Kings xv. 22.* *Judges xx. 1.*

And brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua, the governour of the city; which were on a mans left hand at the gate of the city.] The high Places of the Gates seems to have been erected there, to offer Incense to those Tutelar Gods, unto whom their idolatrous Kings had committed the Protection of their City. And *Kimchi* thinks that the Governour of the City had his private household God, and a portable Altar whereon he offered to his domestick Idol. Which *Jofiah* did not spare; but let the greatest Men see his impartial Zeal against all Idolatry.

Ver. 9. Nevertheless, the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.] He mixed Mercy together with Severity. For though he did not suffer those

those Priests, who had offered Incense in those High Places (directly contrary to the Law, *Deut. xii. 11.*) to offer Sacrifices at God's Altar; because they had defiled themselves with that sinful Worship, though to the true God; yet he permitted them to partake of the Bread of the Priests, which comprehends all those Parts of any Sacrifice that was the Priest's Portion. He mentions indeed only the Meat-offering; which was to be of *unleavened bread* (*Levit. ii. 4, 5, 11.*) but that is put by a *Synecdoche* for all other Offerings belonging to the Priests. So that they were put into the Condition of those Priests that had any Blemish; who might not offer the bread of their God, *Levit. xxi. 17, 21.* But they might eat the bread of their God, both of the Holy and most Holy, *ver. 22. Ezek. xlv. 10.*

Ver. 10. And he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom.] By throwing all manner of Filth into it, as well as by throwing down the Altars on which they sacrificed their Children, as the *Syriack* and *Arabick* seem to understand it.

That no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Moloch.] Though a great Number of the *Hebrew* Doctors think that their passing their children through the fire, was nothing more, than making them pass between two Fires, whereby they were consecrated to that Idol; yet it is certain, as I have shewn before, *xvi. 3,* that they offered their Children sometimes as burnt Sacrifices to Idols. Which was a thing so horrid, that perhaps they invented this instead of it, to make them pass through two Fires. Or perhaps the Opinion of *Maimonides* may be true, that they did not burn their Children to *Moloch*, as they did to other Idols: But the entire Worship of *Moloch* was absolved, by making Children only pass through the Fire to him; as his Words are in his Book of *Idolatry*, *Cap. 6. §. 5;* which may be confirmed from *Jerem. xix. 5,* where he saith; *they burnt their sons with fire unto Baal in Tophet.* See *Selden Syntag. 1. De Diis Syris*, *Cap. 6.* where he largely treats of this.

Ver. 11. And he took away] That is, he destroyed, as the *Hebrew* Word signifies, *ver. 5.* where we translate it, *he put down the Chomarim;* that is, destroyed or slew those Priests, as *Bochartus* interprets it. So *Levit. xxvi. 6,* we translate the same Word, *I will rid evil Beasts out of the Land;* that is, destroy them. The *LXX* here translate it *κατέκαυσε*, *he burnt* the Horses; as before, *κατέκαυσε χάμους*, *he burnt* the Priests: Though perhaps in both Places it should be *κατέπαυσε*, *he made to cease*, as the *Hebrew* Word literally signifies.

The horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun,] That is, had consecrated to the Sun; as *Levit. xx. 2,* they are said to give their Children to *Molech*. A great Number of Authors tell us, that among several Nations these Animals were sacred to the Sun (as *Hawks* and some other Creatures were) because of their Swiftmess in their Course. But it is uncertain, whether they were kept to be sacrificed to the Sun (as they were among the *Massagetæ*, *Persians*, *Armenians*, and other People mentioned by *Bochartus*) or only to be led forth in Pomp (as some of the *Jews* speak) every Morning to

meet the Rising Sun. Or, as others take it, the Worshippers of the Sun got upon these Horses early in the Morning, and rode out to adore the Sun at its rising. See *Hierozoicon. P. 1. Lib. 11. Cap. 10.*

At the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain,] Or, the Eunuch, who was some great Officer in the Court.

Which was in the suburbs,] So the *Targum* interprets the Word *Parvarim*; which most Translations retain as the Name of a Place, unto which the Street in which these Horses were kept reached; from the Chamber of *Nathan-melech*. He was the principal Officer, perhaps, that looked after them; and had the Oversight of all those Stables which were built from the Temple Gate to *Parvarim*. And perhaps he rode out himself every Morning upon one of them, to salute the rising Sun in the King's Name.

And burnt the chariots of the sun with fire.] The ancients fancied the Sun it self was carried about in a Chariot (as *Bochart* observes in the Place above-mentioned) and therefore Chariots as well as Horses, were dedicated to it. Which he makes an Argument, that they were not meer brazen, silver, or golden Statues of Horses that are here meant; but real living Horses to draw those Chariots. See *Vossius de Orig. & Prog. Idol. Lib. 11. Cap. 4.* Some of those who think they were only *imagines equorum* & *quadrigarum* (as *Selden* speaks, *Syntag. 2. De Diis Syris*, *Cap. 8.*) Images of Horses and Chariots, made of some Metal or other, imagine they were represented in the Shape of *Griffins*, as the famous *M. Spoon* thought. See *Dr Hyde, De Relig. Vet. Pers. p. 117.*

Ver. 12. And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Abaz, which the kings of Judah had made,] They were not satisfied with the publick Altars they had made, in a vast Number of high Places: But the Roofs of their Houses being flat, they made Altars there (see *Jerem. xix. 13. xxxii. 29. Zephani. i. 5.*) and particularly upon the King's Palace, where they worshipped the Sun, Moon, and Stars. But this could not privilege them from Destruction, that they were on the Top of the King's House.

And the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence; and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron.] It is said in *2 Chron. xxxiii. 13,* that when *Manasseh* repented, he took away all the altars he had made in the mountain of the house of the *L O R D*: and I suppose those in the Courts of the Priests and of the People were then removed. But *Amon* set them up again in the very Place where *Manasseh* had erected them; and so they are here called his Altars.

Ver. 13. And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption,] That is, Mount Olivet, *1 Kings xi. 2,* which was anciently called *Harmischab* the Mount of *Unction*; because of the Olives that grew there in great Plenty; but, by Way of Contempt and Scorn, was called by the Prophets *Harmaschith*, the Mount of Corruption, because of the Idols that were placed there, whereby

whereby the People were corrupted in their Religion.

Which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemoth the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon,] It is not to be doubted but these detestable Idols had been taken away by such religious Kings as *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, and *Hezekiah*; but they were restored again by their impious Successors, in the very same Place; and the same Figure with those ancient ones; and so are here called those that *Solomon* made, because he was the first Author of them, or at least permitted them to be made by his Wives, and connived at their Worship, as *R. Levi* thinks.

Did the king defile.] By dead Mens Bones, and other unclean things, which he threw into those Places.

Ver. 14. And he broke down the images, and cut down the groves.] Wherein the Images were.

And filled their places with the bones of men.] Which he caused to be digged out of their Graves, and burnt; being the Bones of idolatrous Priests, *ver. 16.*

Ver. 15. Moreover, the altar that was at Beth-el,] For this City and the Territories thereof had been under the Power of *Judah*, ever since the Reign of *Abijah*, 2 Chron. xiii. 19, 20.

And the high places which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place, he brake down, and burnt the high place, and stampd it small as powder, and burnt the grove.] That is, he burnt the golden Calf, as *Mr Selden* thinks; for *Asherah* commonly signifies some Image, as he shews in his Discourse about *Astarte*, whose Image 'tis likely this was; for the golden Calf, as the *Jews* think, was carried away before this. But that is not certain: and *Selden's* Opinion is probable, that the *Golden Calves* were made of Wood gilded over, and thence called *Golden*, which were easily burnt. *Syntag. 1. De Diis Syris, Cap. 4.*

Ver. 16. And as Josiah turned himself,] Looking round about him; being resolved to trust no Man's Eyes but his own, in discovering the Monuments of Idolatry.

He spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount,] It is not said whose Sepulchres they were; but it is probable, of the idolatrous Priests (for in the *Chronicles* he is said to have burnt their Bones) and of the Prophets and great Men, who had been Instruments to promote *Jeroboam's* Idolatry.

And sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it,] For nothing was more unclean than that which had touched dead Mens Bones.

According to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.] Who foretold three hundred and sixty-two Years ago these very things should be done by a King called *Josiah*, 1 Kings xiii. 2.

Ver. 17. Then he said, What title is that that I see?] There was one Stone, or Pillar, I suppose, more eminent than the rest, with the Name of the Persons buried under it: And therefore called a *Title*, because there was an Inscription engraven upon it, according to the Custom among the *Jews* (as now among us)

to preserve thereby the Memory of those they loved.

And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.] The King was the more curious (as *Rasi*, and *Kimchi* also tells the Story out of the *Midrasch*) to know whose Grave that was; because on one Side of it he saw Nettles and Thistles grow, and on the other Side Myrtles and other odoriferous Plants; signifying that there lay a true Prophet and a false. For which there is no Ground, but their fabulous Fancy.

Ver. 18. And he said, Let him alone, let no man move his bones:] It is pertinently observed by *Job. Walphius*, that if pious Persons in those Days had had the same Opinion about Reliques which now is in the Church of *Rome*, the King would not meerly have ordered his Bones to lie quiet and undisturbed; but put them into golden Boxes, and carried them to *Jerusalem*, to be there religiously worshipped by the People.

And they let his bones alone, and the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.] That is, out of the Country of *Samaria*.

Ver. 19. And all the houses also of the high places] What these Houses were, whether Places for Worship, or for the Habitation of the Priests of the high Places (mentioned in the next Verse) is uncertain. It is most likely the former; because they provoked God to Anger.

That were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger,] In such Cities of *Samaria* as were in the Possession of the King of *Judah*; for upon the Fall of the *Assyrian* Empire, many of the Cities, no doubt, became subject to their old Masters.

Josiah took away, and did unto them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.] That is, he brake them down, and burnt them, and stamped them to Powder, *ver. 15.*

Ver. 20. And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there, upon the altars,] There were some Priests of the high Places (of whom we read before, *ver. 8, 9.*) that he did not kill; for they were such as sacrificed only unto God in the high Places. But those whom he slew, were either the Priests of *Jeroboam* who worshipped the Calves, and had no Right to the Priesthood (but had invaded it by the Favour of their King) or such Priests of the Order of *Aaron* as sacrificed to *Baal*, or other false Gods.

And burnt mens bones upon them,] Which was the highest Pollution of those Altars, *ver. 13, 14.*

And returned to Jerusalem.] Having made a Progress through all the Country, to abolish idolatrous Worship where it was practised; he returned to *Jerusalem*, there to restore the Solemnities of true Religion.

Ver. 21. And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the Passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant.] Which he had bound them and himself to observe, *ver. 3.* and now tried them whether they would stand to the Covenant, as they promised, by making a Proclamation through the whole Kingdom that they should keep this Feast.

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Which was a Commemoration of the greatest Benefit God ever bestowed on them, before the giving them the Law, for it made them a free Nation.

Ver. 22. *Surely there was not held such a passover from the days of the judges, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, and of the kings of Judah.]* Since the Time of the Prophet Samuel, the last of their Judges, there had never been such a great Concourse of People at any Passover, nor such a Multitude of Sacrifices offered; nor such an exact Observation of the Rites and Ceremonies belonging to this Feast. For in the Time of Hezekiah many were absent; and many had not purified themselves as they ought: But now, as *Rabag* expounds it, they were all turned to the LORD, and there were no Idolaters nor Apostates among them. See *Selden, Lib. 1. De Syned. Cap. xii. p. 478.*

Ver. 23. *But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover was held unto the LORD in Jerusalem.]* In the same Year that he took care to have the Temple repaired (xxii. 3.) and to purge it from all Idols (xxiii. 4.) he restored the true Worship of God to such Purity as it had not been in for some Ages.

Ver. 24. *Moreover, the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards,]* Of which see what I have noted upon *Levit. xix. 31. xx. 6.*

And the images,] In the Hebrew the *Tera-phim*, which were very ancient among Idolaters, as I have observed upon the Book of *Genesis, xxxi. 19.*

And the idols,] Of which there were many sorts, that are all comprehended in this Word.

And all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah, and in Jerusalem,] What these Abominations were is not certain, but it is likely they were such as *Ezekiel* saw and describes in after-times; when God shewed him what odious things they committed secretly. See *Ezek. viii. 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, &c.*

Did Josiah put away, that he might perform all the words of the law, which were written in the book that Hilkiab the priest found in the house of the LORD.] He had his Spies, it is probable, to discover all secret Idolatry, as well as publick, which being found out he abolished, as abominable unto God.

Ver. 25. *And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.]* He doth not compare him with David and Hezekiah (as *Procopius Gazæus* here notes) but with other pious Kings, such as *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, and *Jotham*; who were far inferior to him in Piety. And Hezekiah himself was not so exact, and did not make such a thorough Search as he did, after all idolatrous Practices. The Nation also was so much corrupted since his Days, by his Son *Manasseh*, who reigned a long Time, that it made the Work of Reformation more difficult in the Time of *Josiah*. Yet in some regard Hezekiah excelled him; and therefore the same Character is given of him (xviii. 5.) which is here given of *Josiah*; because of his Trust in God, in the Time of his greatest Distress, for

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which he was very eminent. But as to Repentance, *Josiah* was most exemplary.

Ver. 26. *Notwithstanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.]* Though *Josiah* was most sincere in what he did, and omitted nothing to restore the Purity of God's Worship among them; yet he could not procure the Preservation of the Nation from Destruction, but only a Forbearance of it for a Time. For the People were so corrupted by *Manasseh*, that they rather complied with *Josiah* in his Reformation, than heartily desired it, out of an inward Affection to it. The innocent Blood also shed by *Manasseh* was unpardonable, xxiv. 3, 4. Of which the People 'tis likely approved, and so fell under an irreversibile Sentence of Destruction. See *Ezek. xxiv. 6.*

Ver. 27. *And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, my name shall be there.]* He peremptorily decreed that they should be carried away Captive, as the Ten Tribes had been; and that his divine Presence among them, should not save them; but he would abandon his own Dwelling-place, and removing from them, leave them a Prey to their Enemies: Which we find lively represented in *Ezek. x. 18, 19.* where the Prophet saw the Glory of the LORD departing from his House, and carried away by the *Che-rubims*.

This may seem strange, as *Abarbinel* observes, that God should thus visit the Sins of *Manasseh* of which he had repented; and not be reconciled after *Josiah* had abolished all Monuments of Idolatry, and the *Israelites* had kept such a Passover, as is before mentioned; unto which he answers, that though it be said *Manasseh* repented; yet it is not said he turned to God with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, as *Josiah* did. For *Manasseh* repented only when he was in great Distress; and though he repented, the People did not; but fell to their idolatrous Practices as soon as he was dead, following his wicked Son *Amon*. Nay, he thinks in the Days of *Josiah* they were little better, as he gathers from xi and xii *Jeremiah*. To which may be added what we read in the Prophet *Zephaniah*, who lived in the Days of *Josiah*, and threatened in the Name of God, *I will utterly consume all things from off the land, and consume both man and beast, Zeph. i. 2, 3.* For they were still private Idolaters, though they complied with the publick Reformation; swearing by the LORD, and by *Malcom*; and when the High Places were taken away, worshipping the Host of Heaven upon the House-Tops, ver. 5.

Ver. 28. *Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?]*

Ver. 29. *In his days Pharaoh-Nechob king of Egypt]* Whom *Herodotus* in his second Book, calls *Nekas*, and mentions the Fight which he had with the Syrians, ἐν Μαρδύλλῳ. See *Usher* his *Annals*, ad A. M. 3394.

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Went up against the king of Assyria,] Who was then King of *Babylon*; for he had subdued the *Assyrians*, and brought them under his Empire. There are those indeed who think this happened before that Time, and that this King of *Egypt* went to revenge the Injuries done them by *Sennacherib*; and he hoped for the better Success, because he was much weakened by that Slaughter the Angel had made of his Army; and because the *Medes* and *Babylonians* had rebelled against the *Assyrians*. But why *Josiah* should go to help the *Assyrians* no Account can be given. Our forementioned *Primate* hath better expounded it, that as the King of *Persia* having subdued *Babylon* and *Assyria*, is called the King of *Assyria*, *Ezra* vi. 22. So here the King of *Babylon* having subdued *Assyria*, is called King of *Assyria*. Besides, that *Babylon* was anciently accounted a Part of *Assyria*; and the Land of the *Chaldeans* is said to be founded by the *Assyrians*, *Isaiah* xxiii. 13. And thus *Josephus* expressly saith, *Lib.* 10. *Antiq.* Cap. 6. *Μήδης πολεμῶν καὶ τὰς Βαβυλωνίους. οἱ τὴν Ἀσσυρίαν κατέλυσαν ἀρχόν.* The King of *Egypt* came to fight the *Medes* and *Babylonians*, who had overturned the *Assyrian* Empire.

To the river Euphrates:] To besiege *Carchemish*, which lay upon that River, as we read, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 20. Which City was possessed by the *Assyrians* in the Time of *Sennacherib* (*Isaiah* x. 9.) but their Empire being overthrown, it returned under the Power of the *Babylonians*.

And king Josiah went against him,] Being afraid he intended to invade his Country in his Passage; or to divert him from his Expedition against the *Babylonians*, with whom he was in League. It is likely the latter was the Reason; for the King of *Egypt* assured him he had no Quarrel with him; and yet he would fight him, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 21, 22.

And he slew him in Megiddo,] Gave him a mortal Wound; of which he died, not till he came to *Jerusalem*, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 24.

When he had seen him.] At the first Brunt, as soon as they had joined Battle. See *xiv.* 8.

Ver. 30. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo,] Mortally wounded (as was said before) which befel him, the *Jews* think, because he did not ask Counsel of the *L O R D*, by the prophet *Jeremiah*.

And brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre:] With such Lamentations, as we no where read were made for any other King, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 25. which continued so long that it came a Proverb, *Zechar.* xii. 11.

And the people of the land took Jehoabaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his fathers stead.] He is called *Shallum*, *Jerem.* xxi. 11. and was younger than *Jehoiakim*, as appears by this, that he was but twenty-three Years old when he began to reign, and reigned but three Months: After which *Jehoiakim* being made King, was twenty-five Years old, *ver.* 31, 36. But the People preferred *Jehoabaz* before him, because perhaps he was the more warlike Person. And they anointed him, as *Abarbinel* thinks, because he was not the First-born, and his Title questionable. For they anointed Persons only when there was a Controversy about

the Succession. *Rabag* also is of Opinion that the People by Force made him King against his Will; which he will have to be the Import of that Phrase, *they took Jehoabaz, &c.*

Ver. 31. Jehoabaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.] His Father *Josiah* had four Sons, and this was the youngest of them, as appears from *2 Chron.* iii. 15. where he is called *Shallum*, as he is by the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Which Name our great *Primate* thinks seemed to the People to be of an ill Omen (for *Shallum* King of *Israel* reigned but one Month) which made them change it into *Jehoabaz*; which proved not much more fortunate to him, for he reigned but three Months, *ad A. M.* 3371.

Ver. 32. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the L O R D, according to all that his fathers had done.] After the Example of *Ahaz*, *Manasseh*, *Amon*, and such like wicked Kings; his Mother perhaps having infused ill Principles into him.

Ver. 33. And Pharaoh-Nechob put him in bands at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem,] When he returned from his Expedition against the *Babylonians*, he deposed this Prince, as an Usurper; or hearing that he intended to be revenged of him for his Father's Death; or that he was of a turbulent Spirit, and so put it out of his Power to give him any Disturbance.

And put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.] In Token of their Subjection to him.

Ver. 34. And Pharaoh-Nechob made Eliakim, the son of Josiah king, in the room of Josiah his father,] For the eldest Son *Jehonah*, in all Likelihood, was dead.

And turned his name to Jehoiakim,] As the Manner of Conquerors was, to change the Names of those whom they had subdued, in Token of their absolute Power over them. See *Daniel* i. 7. And the forenamed *Primate* thinks he gave him this Name, that he might testify, he ascribed his Victory over the *Babylonians* to *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*; who he said excited him to that Expedition, *2 Chron.* xxxv. 21, 22.

And he took Jehoabaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.] According to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, whom God sent to call this new King and the People to Repentance (*xxii.* 1, 2, 3.) *Weep ye not for the Dead (i. e. for Josiah) neither bemoan him, but weep sorely for him that goeth away (that is, for Shallum) for he shall return no more, nor see his native Country, &c. but he shall die in the place whither they shall lead him captive, &c.* *Jerem.* xxii. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 35. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money, according to the commandment of Pharaoh;] For the Treasures of the *LORD's* House, and of the King's, it seems were empty.

He exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it to Pharaoh-Nechob.] Proportionable to every Man's Estate.

Ver. 36. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.]* In the very Beginning of his Reign *Jeremiah* was sent to him with a Message from God, to bring him to Repentance, *Jerem. xxvi. 1, 2, 3. Jerem. xxvii.* where he seems (*ver. 12.*) to have told his Brother *Zedekiah* that he should be King, if *Jehoiakim* was disobedient; and exhorts him not to be so.

Ver. 37. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.]* See *ver. 32.* For he killed the Prophet *Urijah*, and was at the Charge to fetch him out of *Egypt*, whither he fled to save his Life, *Jerem. xxvi. 20, 21, &c.* And if it had not been for *Abikam* the son of *Shaphan*, who had been a great Man in his Father *Josiah's* Court, he had served *Jeremiah* in the same Manner, *ver. 24.*

C H A P. XXIV.

Verse 1. **I**N his days *Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up,]* He is called by heathen Writers *Nabo-col-assar*: and, as *Primate Usher* thinks, *Nebopolassar* was his Father. He begun his Reign in the fourth Year of *Jehoiachin*, as *Jeremiah* tells us, *xxv. 1.* When having smote the Army of *Pharaoh-Nechob* at *Carchemish* near *Euphrates* (*Jerem. xli. 2.*) he came up to make the *Jews* Tributaries to him, as they had been to *Pharaoh*.

And Jehoiachin became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him.] He omits his being bound in Chains, and carried to *Babylon*, which was in the fifth Year of King *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the eighth of *Jehoiachin* (*2 Chron. xxxvi. 6.*) where having been kept a while, and promising Fidelity to *Nebuchadnezzar*, he restored him to his Kingdom, in which he served him three Years; and then in his ninth Year rebelled against him, by the Instigation, it is probable, of *Pharaoh*, who began to gather Strength again. But this proved fatal to him, for *Pharaoh* was not able to help him, *ver. 7.*

Ver. 2. *And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it,]* These were all subject to *Nebuchadnezzar*, whom he sent to chastise *Jehoiachin*, before he came himself, and besieged *Jerusalem*, and carried away Part of the Vessels of the House of the LORD, &c. For this was the third Year mentioned by *Daniel* after he was restored to his Kingdom (*Dan. i. 1, 2.*) when he, *Hananiah*, *Michael*, and *Azariah* were carried captive to *Babylon*, *ver. 6.*

According to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.] By the Prophet *Isaiah*, *xx. 17, 18.* of this Book, and by *Huldah*, *xxii. 16.* and *Jeremiah* in the xiv and xv Chapters.

Ver. 3. *Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them*
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out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did:] By God's special Order those People came up against *Judah* (therefore in the Verse before he is said to send them) because they were incurable. For *Manasseh*, had so corrupted the whole Body of the people, that *Josiah's* Reformation could not recover them; but immediately upon his Death, his Son relapsed to the old Idolatry.

Ver. 4. *And also for the innocent blood that he shed (for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood) which the LORD would not pardon.]* See *xxi. 16.* Upon the Repentance of *Manasseh*, and the Reformation made by *Josiah*, God deferred their Punishment; but he resolved not to grant them an absolute Pardon of their Iniquity; which provoked him to decree their Extirpation.

Ver. 5. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 6. *So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers:]* It appears by this, that to sleep with one's fathers signifies no more than to die, as they did. For *Jehoiakim* was not buried with them, nor died in his Bed: But being taken by the *Chaldeans*, he died as they led him out of *Jerusalem*, and, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah* (*xxii. 18, 19.*) they cast him out of the Gates, and he had the Burial of an Ass; that is, lay upon the Ground unburied. *Abarbinel* thinks he died in the Way to *Babylon*; and his Body was left in the High-way, without any Care taken to interr it; but it lay exposed to the Sun by Day and to the Frost by Night, *Jerem. xxxvi. 30.*

And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.] Who is called also *Jechoniah*, *1 Chron. iii. 16.* and more briefly *Choniah* (by way of Contempt, as some think) *Jerem. xxii. 24.*

Ver. 7. *And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt, to the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.]* After the Fight at *Carchemish* (which I mentioned, *ver. 1.*) *Nebuchadnezzar* conquered all the Places that the King of *Egypt* held, between that and the River of *Egypt*. Concerning which, see my Notes on *Gen. xv. 13.* So that he durst not stir out of the Limits of his own Country, which was bounded by that River, till the Reign of *Zedekiah*. When the King of *Egypt* adventured to come up to help him, but in vain; for he was forced to return to his own Land, *Jerem. xxxvii. 7, 8.*

Ver. 8. *Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign,]* That is, when he began to reign alone after his Father's Death: But his Father when he was but eight Years old made him his Associate in the kingdom (*2 Chron. xxxvi. 9.*) that he might continue the Kingdom in his Family, and there might be no Contention among his Sons about it. Thus this Account and that in the *Chronicles* are easily reconciled. When his Father had reigned one Year, he took him to reign with him; and so he came to reign ten Years with his Father, and three Months alone. Now here *Ezra* mentions only the Years he reigned alone, but there he speaks of all that he reigned with his Father and alone. *Abarbinel* gives another Account of this Difficulty
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culty, with which I shall not trouble the Reader; it seeming to me a little more forced than this Solution of it. And the plainest Way is to acknowledge an Error in the Transcriber of the Book of *Chronicles*.

And he reigned in Jerusalem three months; &c.] And ten days, as it is explained, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9. but such small Numbers are wont to be omitted in greater Sums. See 1 Kings xvi. 18.

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the L O R D, according to all that his father had done.]* A wonderful thing, that he should not be moved to do better, by the sad Example of his Father, and his Predecessor.

Ver. 10. *At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged.]* It is likely that Nebuchadnezzar heard he was entered into a Confederacy with the King of Egypt, as his Successor did; and therefore sent an Army against him in the very Beginning of his Reign, to lay Siege to Jerusalem, against which he intended to come himself. Some of the Jews say, that the Counsellors of Nebuchadnezzar represented to him how unadvisedly he had acted, in making him King, whose Father had been in Rebellion against him; using this Proverb, *From an ill Dog never comes a good Whelp.* Whereupon he resolved to depose him, and make Zedekiah King.

Ver. 11. *And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.]* He first sent an Army under his great Commanders, and then came in Person, and found they had obeyed his Orders, and invested the City.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers:]* He made a Surrender of the City into the Hands of the King of Babylon; by the Counsel of Jeremiah perhaps, who advised the same to his Successor more than once, *Jerem. xxi. 9. xxvii. 17. xxxviii. 2.* And happy was it for him that he obeyed, and gave up himself to the King of Babylon; for God declared by the Figure of good and bad Figs, that he had sent them into the Land of the Chaldeans for their Good; whereas they that remained in the Land should be removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth, for their Hurt. See *Jerem. xxiv. 3, 6, 7, 8, &c.*

And the king of Babylon took him the eighth year of his reign.] That is, in the eighth Year of Nebuchadnezzar's Reign: For he began to reign in the fourth Year of Jehoiakim; who reigned seven more after that, which was the eighth Year of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ver. 13. *And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the L O R D, and all the treasures of the kings house,]* There being no Mention of the carrying away of the Ark, either here, or in the Book of the *Chronicles*, or in *Jeremiah*, among the holy Things of the Temple, it is probable that it was burnt, together with the Temple, in the next Reign, when the remaining holy Things were carried away, but nothing said of this. For what the Jews say of its being hidden by the Prophet

Jeremiah in a certain Cave in Mount *Nebo*, is a meer Fable; there being no Ark in the second Temple, as they confess, which there might have been, if it had been only hidden 'till the Temple was restored.

And cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of the L O R D,] That is, all in a manner, but not absolutely all; for some were remaining, or else renewed again (which is not likely) *xxvi. 14, 15.* And by cutting in pieces must be meant no more than their being cut off from the Temple; which was deprived of a principal Part of its Treasure; for these Vessels were preserved entire, and not cut in Pieces, as appears from *Dan. v. 2.*

As the L O R D had said.] By the Prophet *Isaiah* unto *Hezekiah*, *xx. 17.* As for the Pillars, and the Sea, and the Bases, and the Residue of the Vessels that were not now taken away, they were only reserved till the next Reign; when *Jeremiah* prophesied they should be carried away also, *Jerem. xxvii. 19, 20, 21, 22.*

Ver. 14. *And he carried away all Jerusalem,]* He explains what he means by the following Words; which restrain it to the principal Persons.

And all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives,] Among whom was *Ezekiel*; who began his Prophecy from this Captivity, *Ezek. i. 2, 3,* and calls it *our captivity*, *xl. 1.* *Mordecai* of the Tribe of *Benjamin* was carried away at this Time, *Esther ii. 5, 6, 7,* if we believe the Jews.

And all the crafts-men and smiths:] By Crafts-men some understand Carpenters; who were Artificers, as the Smiths were.

None remained, save the poorest people of the land.] Who were so numerous, that Zedekiah was tempted to rebel, and that against his Oath of Fidelity to the King of Babylon.

Ver. 15. *And he carried Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the kings mother, and the kings wives, and the officers, and the mighty men of the land; those carried he into captivity, from Jerusalem to Babylon.]* All that belonged to the Court, or that were of any Quality in the Country. See *Jerem. xxiv. 1. xxix. 1, 2. Ezek. xvii. 12, 13.*

Ver. 16. *And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and crafts-men, and smiths a thousand; all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.]* This and the foregoing Verses *Abarbinel* explains in this Manner. By the ten thousand mentioned *ver. 14.* are meant in general the whole Number of Judah and Benjamin that were now carried Captive. Then here he comes to shew how this Number was made up (*ver. 15, 16.*) *Jehoiachin*, and all his Court and great Men were seven thousand, the Crafts-men and Smiths a thousand. The rest were not mighty Men, nor such Tradesmen, but Ministers and Servants of the Court, and other considerable Men in the Country who made up two thousand more, and completed the ten thousand. *Jeremiah* computes them to have been but a little above three thousand that were now carried away to Babylon: But he reckons only those that were carried from Jerusalem; whereas here is an Account of those that were carried from other

other Cities, and out of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, which were seven thousand. There was another Captivity before this in the last Year of King *Nebopolazzar* (*Dan.* i. 1, 2, 3.) but then only a few select Persons were carried away, to wait upon the King of *Babylon*; and therefore are not mentioned either by *Jeremiah* or by this divine Writer. But a very learned Friend of mine, in his late *Chronology of the Old Testament*, p. 49, thinks that the first Captivity was the greatest of all; those Words, xxiv. 3. *This came upon Judah to remove them out of God's sight*, implying (in his Opinion) that not only some of the Seed Royal, with some others, but the Body of the People were led into Captivity. And therefore he dates the *Seventy Years Captivity* from that Time; viz. the Fourth Year of *Jeboiachim*, in the Beginning of the Reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*. See *Jerem.* xxv. 1, 11, 12.

Ver. 17. *And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his fathers brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.*] Which signifies the Justice of God: And seems to have been given him, to put him in mind of the just Judgment of God, which would fall upon him, if he broke the Oath of Fidelity which he took to the King of *Babylon*, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13. *Ezek.* xvii. 13, 14, 18.

Ver. 18. *And Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, &c.*] In the End of which he was carried Captive, *Jerem.* i. 3.

Ver. 19. *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jeboiakim had done.*] Not regarding what *Jeremiah* said unto him, but shut him up in Prison, &c. *Jerem.* xxxiii. 1, 2. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 12. And his Servants, and the People of the Land, were as bad as himself, *Jerem.* xxxvii. 1, 2.

Ver. 20. *For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Judah and Jerusalem, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.*] God was so highly displeased with this wicked People, that he permitted *Zedekiah* to break his Faith with *Nebuchadnezzar*, and to rebel against him, forgetting for what Cause he changed his Name. Unto his Revolt, it is probable, he was persuaded by the Embassadors which the Kings of *Edom*, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Tyre* and *Zidon* sent unto him, to solicit him to throw off the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, *Jerem.* xxvii. 2, 3, 4, &c. Which was the greater Crime, because he had made him swear by God he would be true to him, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13. The King of *Egypt* also, it is likely, promised him Help, as I noted before, ver. 7. and see *Ezek.* xvii. 15. And *Hananiah* a false Prophet assured him God would in two Years Time break the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, and bring back all the Vessels of the House of God, with *Jeboiachin* and all the Captives. See *Jerem.* xxviii. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. *Jeremiah* indeed proved that he made them trust in a Lie, by predicting his Death that very Year, which accordingly fell out, ver. 15, 16, 17. But they still persisted in their vain Hopes, there being other Deceivers, that prophesied falsely in God's Name, *Jerem.* xxix. 8, 9. And they most of all deceived themselves with

proud Conceits that they were the true Seed of *Abraham*, who had a Right to that Land, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 24.

C H A P. XXV.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass, in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem,*] See *Jerem.* xxxix. 1. lii. 4.

And pitched against it,] Encamped themselves before it.

And they built forts against it round about.] On which to place their Batteries, and keep any Relief from coming to them.

Ver. 2. *And the city was besieged to the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.*] There was another Siege begun before this; viz. in the third Year of *Zedekiah*; but during this second Siege, the King of *Egypt* came to help *Zedekiah*. Which made the *Chaldeans* raise the Siege for a Time, *Jerem.* xxxvii. 12. And then *Jeremiah* endeavoured to get out of the City, but was hindered; and bad them not flatter themselves, for the *Chaldeans* should return, and burn the City with Fire; as he had told *Zedekiah* before, xxxiv. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 3. *And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.*] Who had fled thither out of the Country, to secure themselves, and their Families. This Famine is described as very terrible, in the Book of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, iv. 10.

Ver. 4. *And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night, by the way of the gate, between two walls, which is by the kings garden (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about) and the king went the way toward the plain.*] It is an hard matter to understand how they made their Escape, since the *Chaldeans* had begirt the City round about; unless we suppose they kept strong Guards only at the Gates of the City: But the *Chaldeans* having made a Breach in the Wall, they got away privately between the Wall and the Out-works, in a Passage which the *Chaldeans* did not suspect. And the King ran into the Champaign Country with some of his Forces attending him. The *Jews* think there were Subterranean Conduits from the Royal Garden into the Plain, through which *Zedekiah* went out; but this is without any Ground.

Ver. 5. *And the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army was scattered from him.*] Every Man shifting away, and endeavouring to save himself in such Places as he could flee unto.

Ver. 6. *So they took the king, and brought him to the king of Babylon, to Riblah,*] Where he lay, to attend the Success of the Siege, and to send them Supplies, and intercept any Relief that might come to them.

And they gave judgment upon him.] A great Council, I suppose, was called; who passed a solemn

solemn Sentence upon him, in condemning him as a rebellious Subject. Thus was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, that he should see the King of *Babylon*, and speak with him, *Jerem.* xxxii. 4. xxxiv. 3.

Ver. 7. *And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes,*] See *Jerem.* lii. 11.

And put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.] Thus two famous Prophecies were fulfilled, which seemed to contradict one the other (whereby *Zedekiah* perhaps was tempted not to believe them) one of *Jeremiah*, that he should be carried to *Babylon* (xxxii. 5. xxxiv. 3.) and the other of *Ezekiel*, that he should not see *Babylon*, xii. 13. The Event made good both; for he was carried thither blind.

Ver. 8. *And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which is the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) came Nebuzaradan captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem :*] It is said in *Jeremiah* lii. 12. that he came on the tenth Day of this Month: That is, he came from *Riblah* upon the seventh, and arrived at *Jerusalem* on the tenth: Or, if he came to *Jerusalem* on the seventh, he did not burn the Temple 'till the tenth; but spent the Eighth and Ninth days, as the Jews say, in eating, drinking, and making merry. *Nebuchadnezzar* did not come himself to *Jerusalem*, but he sent this great Man to execute his Commands; who, the Jews say, became a Profelyte.

Ver. 9. *And he burnt the house of the LORD,*] After it had stood four hundred Years, as *Sir John Marsham* computes it. But *Primate Usher* makes Account it was burnt four hundred twenty-four Years, three Months and eight Days, after it began first to be built by *Solomon*. But neither of these Accounts are true, if we believe all the learned Jews (*Kimchi*, *Rabag*, *Abarbinel*, &c.) who agree that it stood four hundred and thirty Years. *Josephus* stands amazed at this that the second Temple was burnt by the *Romans*, in this very Month, and the same Day of the Month, *Lib. 6. De Bello Judaico, Cap. 27.* And so we read in *Seder Olam Rabba, Cap. 30*, that the *Levites* were in their Desks singing the very same Song in both Destructions, which was this, *He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness: yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.* *Psal. xciv. 28.*

And the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.] By *Col beth gadol*, which signifies every great House, the *Talmudists* understand all the *Synagogues*. But *Kimchi*, *Rabag*, and *Abarbinel* interpret the Words as we do. And so the *Targum*; yea, *Jarchi* himself, who is the most tenacious of the *Talmudical* Interpretations, after he had said, *The house of the Synagogues, where the Law and Prayers were read*, adds these Words, *and the Palaces of the Princes*; not daring (as *Vitinga* observes) to vouch the former for a literal Interpretation, *Lib. de Synag. P. 2. Cap. 11.*

Ver. 10. *And all the army of the Chaldeans that were with the captain of the guard, brake*

down the walls of Jerusalem round about.] That they who were left there might not be able to make any Resistance hereafter; and that it might no longer be looked upon as a City, but as an open Village.

Ver. 11. *Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude,*] That is, all that escaped the Sword and the Famine; and all that fled to the King of *Babylon*, and put themselves under his Protection.

Did Nebuzaradan captain of the guard carry away.] Who were in all eight hundred thirty and two Persons; as we read in *Jerem.* lii. 29. Where he saith in the eighteenth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar* (that is, in the End of it, and the Beginning of his nineteenth Year) he carried away this Number.

Ver. 12. *But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land, to be vinedressers, and husbandmen.*] What should move the *Talmudists* by the Hebrew Word *Ceremim* to understand *Gatherers of Balsam*; and by *Jogebim*, *Fishers for Purple*, is hard to understand (though *Bochartus* hath attempted some Account of it) when *Jeremiah* tells us expressly that he gave these poor People Vineyards and Fields; which shews what they were, *Jerem. xxxix. 10.*

Ver. 13. *And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon.*] They were too cumbersome to be carried away whole, therefore he brake them in Pieces, and so transported the Brasses of which they were made.

Ver. 14. *And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.*]

Ver. 15. *And the fire-pans, and the bowls, and such things as were of the gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away.*] He did not alter these, but carried them away as he found them; that he might give a punctual Account of them to his Master. And the singular Providence of God herein appeared, that these Vessels were not embezzelled, nor employed to any common Use, but put into the House of the King of *Babylon's* God, viz *Belus*, where they were preserved to be restored, in God's appointed Time, by *Cyrus*. So we read they were, *Ezra i. 7, 8, &c.*

Ver. 16. *And the two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the brass of all these vessels were without weight.*] So we read they were, when they were first made, *1 Kings vii. 47.*

Ver. 17. *And the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapter three cubits; and wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass; and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.*] These two Pillars are more fully described in *1 Kings vii. 15, &c.* and in *Jerem. lii. 21, &c.*

Ver. 18. *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest,*] Whom the Jews call the *Sagan*; who

was the Deputy of the High Priest, in Case of Sickness, or any Incapacity to officiate.

And the three keepers of the door.] Of the Vessels of the Temple, saith *Kimchi*; or of the Treasury.

Ver. 19. *And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence,]* Who constantly attended the King's Person wheresoever he was.

Which were in the city,] Where at first they found but five of them; but afterwards seven, *Jerem.* lii. 26.

And the principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land,] The Muster-Master-General, as we speak, or some such great Officer.

And threescore people of the land, that were found in the city.] These were some eminent Persons who had concealed themselves in some private Place; but before *Nebuzaradan* left *Jerusalem*, were discovered. And the Jews will have it that they were the Men of the Great Sanhedrim; whose whole Number of seventy-one Persons, they make a shift to find here, viz. the three Keepers of the Door, and the seven near Attendants upon the King, and the Scribe; which with these threescore, make seventy-one. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *De Synedriis*, Cap. xvi. p. 671.

Ver. 20. *And Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon, at Riblah.]* That he might dispose of them as he thought fit; they being not vulgar Persons, like those whom he had ordered to be carried Captive, or left in the Land.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath.]* Passed the sentence of Death upon them; which was forthwith executed; because he looked upon them, it is likely, as the King's principal Counsellors, who advised him to rebel against him. And the Judgment of God, *Strigelius* here observes, was remarkable upon impious Priests; whom he suffered not to live, because they had been great Instruments in promoting Idolatry.

So Judah was carried away out of their land.] Four hundred sixty and eight Years after the Beginning of the Reign of *David*; three hundred eighty and eight Years since the Division of the Ten Tribes from *Judah* and *Benjamin*; and an hundred thirty-four Years since the Destruction of the Ten Tribes; as our *Primate of Ireland* makes Account.

Ver. 22. *And for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left,]* Ver. 12.

Even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Abikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler.] His Father *Abikam* was a great Friend of *Jeremiah*, *Jerem.* xxvi. 14. and therefore *Gedaliah* may be presumed to have been so likewise; and by his Advice, it is likely, was one of those that went out to the King of *Babylon*, ver. 11.

Ver. 23. *And when the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governour,]* That is, such as fled away with *Zedekiah*, ver. 5. and those that fled perhaps before the Siege to the

Moabites, and *Ammonites*, and *Edomites*, and other neighbouring Countries. See *Jerem.* xl. 7, 11, 12.

There came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Netbaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareab, and Seraiah the son of Tankumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniab the son of a Maachathite, they, and their men.] He reckons up the principal Persons that came in to him, with those under their Command. *Jeremiah* also himself put himself under his Protection, *Jerem.* xlvi. 5, 6.

Ver. 24. *And Gedaliah swore unto them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.]* He was so well assured of the King of *Babylon's* Favour to him, that he secured them by an Oath, they should be safe under his Government; provided they would serve the King of *Babylon*, which it was their Interest to do.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass in the seventh month,]* After he had been Governour about two Months, ver. 8, &c.

That Ishmael the son of Netbaniah, the son of Elishamah of the seed royal,] His Pride (being of the Seed Royal) tempted him to conspire against *Gedaliah*; though he had no Power to maintain any Authority in the Country; but was forced presently to flee away. Nor was the King of *Moab*, who instigated him to this Villany, (*Jerem.* xl. 14.) able to support him.

Came, and ten men with him,] These Ten Men were Commanders no doubt of some Forces under them; for so few were not sufficient to make a Slaughter of *Gedaliah*, and all the Jews and Chaldeans that were with him. See *Jerem.* xli. 1, 2, 3.

And he smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.] This Story is told more largely in the xl and xli of *Jeremiah*; where we read that *Gedaliah* was admonished of this intended Conspiracy against him; but, like other Good Men who are commonly void of Suspicion, because they have no Design to hurt others, he did not believe what was told him.

Ver. 26. *And all the people small and great, and the captains of the armies arose, arose came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.]* Contrary to the Persuasion of *Jeremiah* (by whom they pretended they would be advised) who assured them that they should be safe if they would stay in the Land of *Judah*, but should perish if they went into *Egypt*. See *Jerem.* xlii. 9, 10, &c. Thus this populous and fertile Country was laid waste and desolate, Part of the People being carried Captive to *Babylon*, Part of those that were left in the Land being slain with *Gedaliah*, the Remainder flying into *Egypt*. So that it was left to be over-run with Briars and Thorns, and to be inhabited by wild Beasts. Only some of the neighbouring Nations seem to have settled themselves in some Parts of it. See *Jerem.* xii. 14. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 4, 5.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth*

twentieth day of the month,] It was resolved on the twenty-fifth Day of the Month, and executed two Days after. So this Place is easily reconciled with *Jerem. lii. 35.*

In the year he began to reign, did Evil-merodach lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison.] Raised him from his dejected Condition; for in Affliction Men hang down their Heads. By this it appears that *Nebuchadnezzar* reigned five and forty Years; for *Jechoniah* was carried Captive in the eighth Year of his Reign, *xxiv. 12.* and now had been Prisoner thirty-seven Years, when *Nebuchadnezzar* was newly dead. Which two Sums put together make forty-five. This is the Account of the *Jews*; but, according to the Canon of *Ptolemy*, he reigned but three and forty Years: And therefore *Primate Usher* makes him to have reigned two Years with his Father.

Ver. 28. And he spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.] He had the Kings of several Countries with him in *Babylon*, whom his Father had taken Captive, and made Prisoners: Unto whom he not only left the Name and Titles of Kings, but now gave them some Liberty, and bestowed a Royal Seat upon them. But he preferred *Jehoiachin* above them all; either because of the great Fame of his Royal Ancestors *David* and *Solomon*, from whom he was descended; or (as the *Jews* say) because he had made a Friendship in Prison with *Evil-merodach*, who was thrown into it by his Fa-

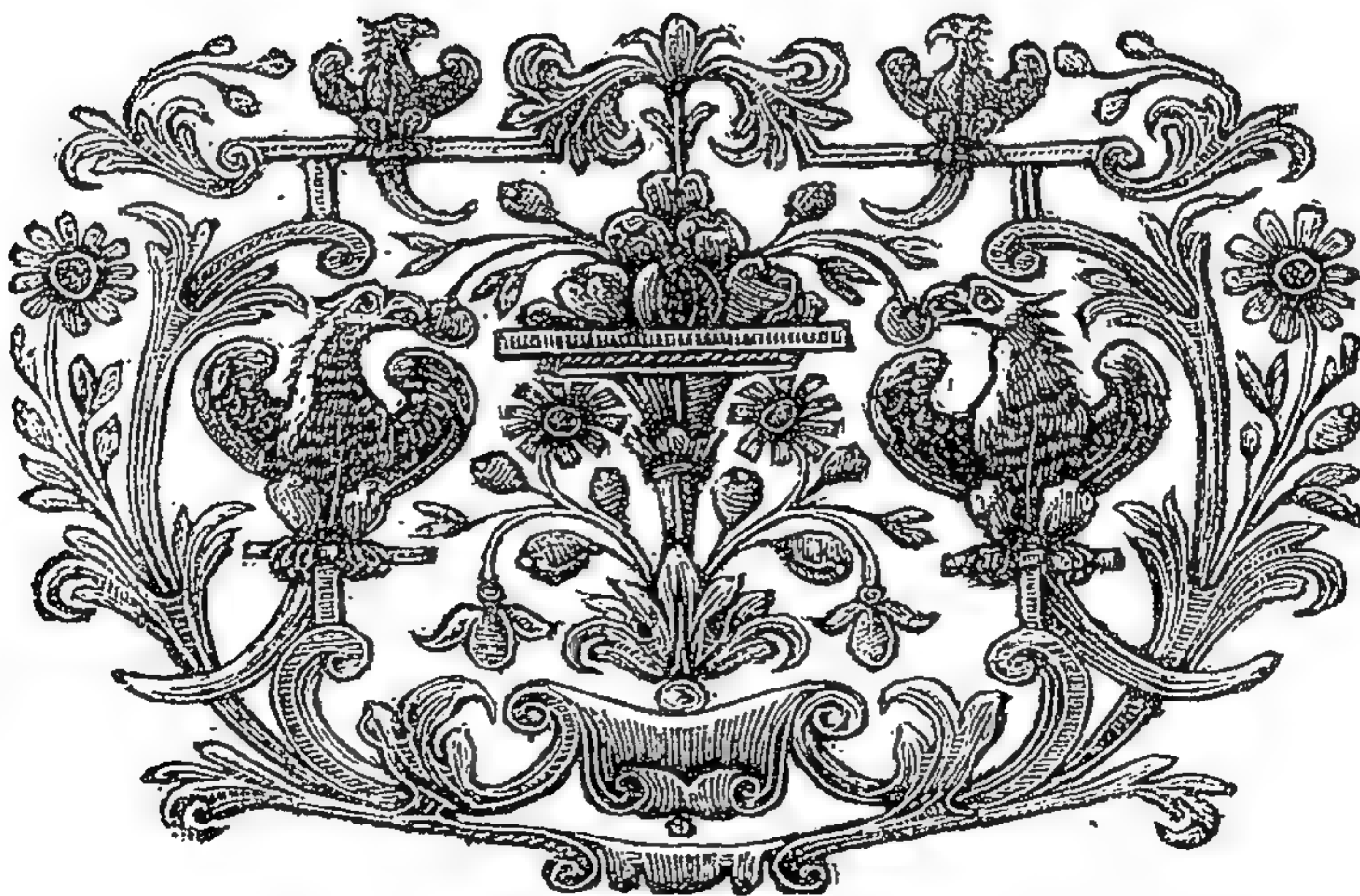
ther *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Male Administration of the Government, during the seven Years that he was moped.

Ver. 29. And changed his prison-garments:] Bestowed on him Royal Apparel; that he might be fit to keep him Company.

And he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.] Was frequently invited to his own Table, as *Cæsus* was to that of *Cyrus*. *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks it not unlikely that he had learned the Doctrine of the true God from the Prophet *Daniel*, as *Nebuchadnezzar* his Father had done; who in a publick Edict professed as much. And upon this Account he shewed such great Kindness to *Jechoniah*. For which Cause he got the Name of *Evil-merodach* among impious Princes; that is, *Foolish Merodach*.

Ver. 30. And his allowance was a constant allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.] The Meaning may be, that when he did not eat with the King, he lived upon a Pension that was duly paid him every Day for Meat, Drink, Cloathing, Lodging, and other Expences. Or if the Word *continually* (in the foregoing Verse) be understood literally, that he always eat with the King; then this Allowance was made for his Family and Attendants; as in the Case of *Mephibosheth*, *2 Sam. ix. 10.* *Jeremiah* in the Conclusion of his Book gives the same Account of the King's extraordinary Kindness to him; which continued, he saith, to the Day of his Death.

I





St. John's sculp.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

FIRST BOOK

OF THE

CHRONICLES.

PREFACE.

IT is the common Opinion of the *Jews* that these Books were written by *Ezra*: Which is the more probable, because the Book of *Ezra* begins with the same Words (without the least Variation) wherewith these Books end: Which argues one and the same Person to have written both; who, to connect his History together, makes use of his own Words, as *Grotius* observes other ancient Authors have done. However, it appears from hence, that these Books were written after the Captivity, since they mention their Restauration by *Cyrus*: And it is also evident from 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25. that they were written after the Time of the Prophet *Jeremiah*.

Huetius, in his learned Work, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, thus far agrees with this Opinion of the *Jews*, that he thinks *Ezra* digested these Books; and added to them the first six Chapters of the Book which bears his Name,

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which afterwards he continued: But *Nehemiah*, he thinks, had some Hand in this Work: Which was gathered not only out of the publick Journals, but of the Writings of the Prophets, *Shimeah*, *Iddo*, *Jebu*, *Nathan*, *Abijah*, *Isaiah*, and others; and it is likely out of some *Genealogies*, (*R. Solomon* saith, upon the seventh Chapter, that after their Return he found three) and out of the other Books of holy Scripture before published, as *Kimchi* adds: And thus *Procopius Gazæus*, *Hæc ex multis prophetarum scriptis collegit*; he gathered these out of many Writings of the Prophets.

That which confirms this Opinion, is what we read in the second Book, *ch.* v. 9. where it is said of the Ark, and its Staves, which *Solomon* brought into the Temple, *there they are to this day*. Which Words are so far (as *Huetius* observes) from proving that these Books were written before the Captivity (after which

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the Ark was no more heard of) that *Ezra* took this Passage, and that in *1 Kings* viii. 8. where are almost the same Words, out of some other ancient Book, and set them down Word for Word, as he found them there. For having wrote the Books of the Kings in the Time of the Captivity, he found at their Return more ancient Registers, containing larger Accounts of several Transactions; which he thought good to add to what he had before written, to make the History more compleat: Which *Dr Alix* (in his *Reflections upon the books of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2. Chap. 1.) thinks was done about *six and twenty* Years after the writing of the Books of the Kings, in the *eighteenth* Year after the Captivity was ended.

This seems to be implied in the Hebrew Title of these Books, which is, *Dibre hajamim*, signifying they contain such things as were contained in the *Diaries* or *Day-Books*, wherein the Passages of those Times were recorded, if any thing memorable happened every Day. The Word *Jamim* also signifying *Years*, these Books may be called *Annals*: Which the *Greeks* call *Παράλειπόμενα*: As much as to say, those things are here supplied, which were omitted in other Books of holy Scripture, especially in the Books of the Kings; as other things are here amplified and enlarged: Others explained and made more clear. For Instance, in the Conclusion of this first Book, he gives an Account of the things which *David* did in his old Age: In ordering the Courses of the Priests, and of the *Levites*, the Singers, and Musicians; and in making vast Preparations for the Building of the Temple by his Son; none of which had been mentioned in the foregoing Books. Thus *Xenophon* (*Strigelius* observes) wrote *Paralipomena* of the *Peloponnesian* War; which had been written before by *Thucydides*.

He begins these Books with a *Genealogy* from the Beginning of the World to his own Time; which had not been done in any Book of Scripture before: But was necessary to be done now, that a Distinction between their Tribes and Families being preserved (which was in Danger to be lost by their Dispersion in the Captivity) it might clearly appear, the *Messiah* sprung out of that Tribe and Family, from which he was to descend, according to the ancient Prophecies. For, as *Procopius Gazæus* observes, from these Books it is that we learn among other things, that *Nathan*, from whom *St Luke* derives the Genealogy of our Saviour, was the Brother of *Solomon* by *David* and *Bathsheba*.

To conclude this Preface, it may be noted, that no Book in the World shews the original Propagation of Mankind, but only the holy Scriptures. They who were ignorant of them having nothing of true Antiquity, devised senseless Fables of their Descent, they knew not how, nor from whom. The *Arcadians* fancied that they were before the Moon: The People of *Thesfaly*, that they sprung from Stones. The *Athenians* took themselves to be ἀντίχθονες, who sprung up out of the Ground; and affirmed, they were more ancient than *Japetus*; who in Truth was the Father of the *Greeks*; *Javan*, from whom came the *Iones*, being the Son of *Japhet*, as these holy Books shew.

See upon *2 Chron.* xxix. 21. a little additional Proof that these Books were written by *Ezra*.

CHAP. I.

Verse 1. *Adam, Seth, Enos,*] He mentions only their Names briefly: But the Meaning is, that *Adam* begat *Seth*, and *Seth* begat *Enos*: And so the rest are to be understood. *Adam* indeed had two Sons before he begat *Seth*: But one of them was murdered without Issue, and the other was accursed; so that all who descended from him perished in the Flood: Therefore, these only that came from *Seth* are remembered.

This may seem to be sufficiently recorded, as much of that which follows is, in the Book of *Genesis*: So that there was no need, some may imagine, to repeat it here: But there being a Genealogy to be drawn of the several Families of the *Jews*, it was fit to begin it with an Account of the Honour they had to be the select People of God, whose Original and Descent was manifest and plain from the very first Man, who was the Son of God. This was the peculiar Glory of the Jewish Nation, that they alone were able to derive their Pedigree from the first Man that God created; of which no other Nation could boast, or make a Shadow of Pretence. Besides, by the Recital of this, the divine Writer of this Book designed to keep up the Belief, that the World was not eternal, but had a Beginning, as is recorded in the Book of *Genesis*.

Ver. 2. *Kenan,*] We translate it *Cainan*, *Gen.* v. 9.

Mahaleel, Jared,] See *Gen.* v. 12, 15.

Ver. 3. *Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech,*] See concerning these, *Gen.* v. 18, 21, 25.

Ver. 4. *Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japhet.*] These were the three Sons of *Noah*: Among whom *Japhet* was the eldest (*Gen.* x. 21.) and therefore his Genealogy is first mentioned. But *Shem* being the Person in whose Posterity true Religion was preserved, and from whom the promised Seed was to come, is first named both here and in *Gen.* v. 31. x. 1.

Ver. 5. *The sons of Japhet, Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.*] Thus they were reckoned up in the same Order, *Gen.* x. 2. where see concerning them.

Ver. 6. *The sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.*] The same Account we have in *Gen.* x. 3.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.*] The same we read, *Gen.* x. 4. And neither there nor here is any mention of the rest of *Japhet's* Posterity, but only of *Gomer* and *Javan*. See *Gen.* x. 5. in the latter End of my Annotations on that Verse.

Ver. 8. *The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.*] In this Place, and in this Order, they are mentioned in *Gen.* x. 6. And the Reason, I suppose, why his Genealogy is mentioned before *Shem's*, is, because from *Shem* the Genealogy of *Abraham* and the Jewish Nation was to be derived: Which it was thought fit to set down without any Interruption.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *And the sons of Cush; Sheba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Rahama, and Sabteca: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.]* See Gen. x. 7. where an Account is given of the Sons of *Cush*, and of his two Grandsons by one of them.

Ver. 10. *And Cush begat Nimrod:]* He mentions him alone by himself, because he was the most eminent among all his Sons. See upon Gen. x. 8. where I have given an Account of the next Words.

He began to be mighty upon earth.] That is, was the first that raised a great Kingdom.

Ver. 11. *And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtubim,]* The very same Account we have in Gen. x. 13. where I have shewn in what Parts of the World their Posterity settled.

Ver. 12. *And Pathrusim, and Caslubim.]* See Gen. x. 14.

(Of whom came the Philistines)] Who were a Colony from the Caslubim.

And Caphthorim.] See Gen. x. 14.

Ver. 13. *And Cainan begat Zidon his first-born, and Hetb,]* See Gen. x. 15.

Ver. 14. *The Jebusite also, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,*

Ver. 15. *The Hivite, and the Archite, and the Sinite,*

Ver. 16. *And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.]* In this very Order they are set down by *Moses*, in Gen. x. 16, 17, 18. See what I have noted there.

Ver. 17. *The sons of Shem; Elam, and Asbur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram,]* Thus they are set down in Gen. x. 22. and *Arphaxad* is mentioned after *Elam* and *Asbur*; just as *Aaron* is after *Moses* in Exod. vi. 27. though he was the elder Brother. For, as the Jews often note, *The Scripture doth not strictly observe the Order of Time.*

And Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech.] These were not the Sons of *Shem*, but his Grandsons by *Aram* his youngest Son: As appears from Gen. x. 22. But nothing is more usual in Scripture, than to call Grandsons by the Name of Sons. As *Laban* is called the Son of *Nabor* (Gen. xxix. 5.) being his Grandchild by *Rebel*. And *Mephibosheth* is called the Son of *Saul*, 2 Sam. xix. 24. because he was descended from him by his Son *Jonathan*. *Meshech* had two Names; for he is called *Mas*, Gen. x. 23. and possessed the Mountain *Masins* in *Mesopotamia*; as *Bochart* thinks in his *Phaleg*. L. ii. cap. 11. Though *Mas* may very well be thought not to be another Name, but only by the Contraction of *Meshech*: Who some think was the Father of the *Cappadocians*.

Ver. 18. *And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.]* He follows *Moses* exactly; who gives no Account of the Posterity of the two Sons of *Shem* first mentioned, but only of the third *Arphaxad*: That he might the sooner come to him from whom the *Israelites* descended. Here the *LXX* interpose *Cainan* between *Arphaxad* and *Shelah*: But it is not in the *Greek Muscovite Translation*; as is observed by *Primate Usher*, in his Letters CCXCVI. And see *Bochart* in his *Phaleg*, L. 2. c. 13.

Ver. 19. *And unto Eber were born two sons:]* See Gen. x. 25.

V O L. II.

The name of the one was Peleg (because in his days the earth was divided)] That is, the Inhabitants of the Earth were divided, and dispersed; according to the Division of their Languages. See my Annotations there.

And his brothers name was Joktan.] Who had a more numerous Issue than any hitherto mentioned.

Ver. 20. *And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,]* See concerning these, Gen. x. 26.

Ver. 21. *Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,]* See Gen. x. 27.

Ver. 22. *And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,]* See Gen. x. 28. where the first of these is called *Obal*: From whence some have argued, that the Name in this Place is corrupted. As if in Process of Time, there might not be a Variation in the Vowel: *Moses* pronouncing the Name as they spake it in his Time, and this Author as they spake in his.

Ver. 23. *And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: All these were the sons of Joktan.]* Who were thirteen in all: And all but one settled their Habitation in *Arabia*. See Gen. x. 29.

Ver. 24. *Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah,]* These are repeated from ver. 17 and 18, to shew how *Abraham* was descended from *Shem*: Who was the most eminent of all *Noah's* Sons; whom he solemnly blessed: The *Messiah* being to spring from him (Gen. ix. 26.) For from *Adam* the Promise of the *Messiah* was translated to *Seth*; and from *Seth* to *Shem*; from *Shem* to *Eber*; from whom the *Hebrew Nation*, some think, derived their Name; and had this precious Promise committed to their Trust, above all other Nations in the World.

Ver. 25. *Eber, Peleg, Reu,*

Ver. 26. *Serug, Nabor, and Terah,]* This Genealogy from *Eber*, is recorded by *Moses*, in Gen. xi. 16, 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 27. *Abram, the same is Abraham.]* God changed his Name from *Abram* to *Abraham*, when he established his Covenant with him (Gen. xvii. 5, &c.) and made him the Father of many Nations.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Abraham; Isaac, and Ishmael.]* *Isaac* is first mentioned, being the Son of a Free-Woman, and the Heir of the Promise: Though *Ishmael* was elder than he, but born of a bond-Woman,

Ver. 29. *These are their generations: The first born of Ishmael, Nebaioth;]* To shew how God made *Abraham* the Father of many Nations, he reckons up twelve great Persons descended from his Son *Ishmael*; the first of which was *Nebaioth*: Concerning whom, and the rest that follow, see Gen. xxv. 13, 14, &c.

Then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,] I shall only observe here, that as from *Nebaioth* came the People called *Nabataei*; so from *Kedar* came the *Cedreni*, whom Geographers call *Cedrei*, and *Cedranitæ*, as *Bochart* observes.

Ver. 30. *Mishma, and Dumah, Massah, Hadad, and Tema,*

Ver. 31. *Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.]* These are the Sons of *Ishmael*. In what Country they dwelt, see Gen. xxv. 18.

Ver. 32. *Now the sons of Keturah, Abrahams concubine:]* After the Death of *Sarah*, *Abraham* married

married *Keturah*: And having many Children by her, this holy Writer names them, to shew how faithfully God made good the Name he gave him, by making *Abraham* the Father of many more Nations.

She bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuab.] See Gen. xxv. 2.

The sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.] There were four *Sheba*'s, as I there observed; and one more of the Name of *Dedan*: And this Man's Sons are there mentioned, though here omitted.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Midian; Ephab, and Ephar, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah.*] See Gen. xxv. 4. The first of these, as *Bochart* thinks, was the same with the Greek *Hippos*, a Mountain and a Village of which Name *Ptolemy* describes on the same Shore, a little below *Madian*, which he calls *Modiana*. In his *Hieroz.* P. i. L. ii. cap. 3.

All these are the sons of Keturah.] Her Sons, or Grandsons.

Ver. 34. *And Abraham begat Isaac. The Sons of Isaac; Esau and Israel.*

Ver. 35. *The sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.*] These were by several Wives, as we read Gen. xxxvi. 10, 14.

Ver. 36. *The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.*] It is plain from Gen. xxxvi. 12. that *Timna* was not one of his Sons, but his Concubine; by whom he begat *Amalek*. This therefore is a short Form of Speech, as much as if he had said, *Of Timna Amalek*. Who was not equal to the rest of his Sons, and therefore he mentions his Mother's Name. *Kimchi* hath expressed this so well, that it may be for the Reader's Use to transcribe some of his Words: Which may serve for a Rule in such like Cases. *In my Judgment*, saith he, *the Scripture uses here a concise and compendious way of speaking: For there was no need that Ezra should recount all these things exactly and accurately, which had been done before in the Law* (he means in the Book of *Genesis*) *therefore he describes these Genealogies briefly. Thus he doth in the seventeenth Verse of this Chapter, mentioning Uz and Hull after Aram: Who were not his Sons but his Grandsons. R. Solomon hath the same Observation. See Buxtorf's Anticritica, P. 2. cap. 2.*

Ver. 37. *The sons of Reuel; Nabath, Zerab, Shammah, and Mizzah.*] Who are called *Dukes*, as the Sons of *Eliphaz* also are (see Gen. xxxvi. 15, 17.) that is, Rulers, or Governors of the Country, but not with Kingly Authority.

Ver. 38. *The sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anab, and Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan.*] This *Seir* was not *Esau*, nor of his Posterity, but the ancient Lord of this Country, from whom it had its Name, (See Gen. xxxvi. 20.) whose Genealogy is here set down, that it may be understood from whom *Timna* and *Amalek* sprung.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and Homam: and Timna was Lotan's Sister.*] This Woman was *Eliphaz* his Concubine, and bare him *Amalek* (ver. 36.) who by his Mother's Side was *Seir*'s Grandson.

Ver. 40. *And of the sons of Shobal; Alian (or*

Abian) and Manabath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam.] See Gen. xxxvi. 23.

And the sons of Zibeon; Aiab, and Anab.] The latter of which was a Person of great Note. See Gen. xxxvi. 24.

Ver. 41. *The sons of Anab; Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.*] The First-born of these was otherwise called *Hemdan*, Gen. xxxvi. 26. which was the Name, it is possible, whereby he was known among *Esau*'s Posterity: Though anciently his Name was *Amram*.

Ver. 42. *The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aaron.*] Among all these Persons descended from *Seir*, seven of them were *Dukes*: Who reigned perhaps at the same Time in several Parts of the Country, Gen. xxxvi. 29, 30. By which it appears, that this was the ancient Form of Government before *Esau* conquered this Country: Which his Posterity at the first followed; but afterward was changed into Kingly, as it here follows.

Ver. 43. *Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the children of Israel;*] See this explained in Gen. xxxvi. 31.

Bela the son of Beor:] This *Beor* was not *Balaam*'s Father, for he was a *Mesopotamian*, not an *Edomite*; but one of the same Name, as *Aben Ezra* well observes.

And the name of his city was Dinkabab.] Of which he was Governor, perhaps, before he was made King: And therefore therein he reigned, and made it the Seat of his Kingdom.

Ver. 44. *And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerab of Bozrah reigned in his stead.*] See concerning this Succession, Gen. xxxvi. 33. *Bozrah* was a City in *Edom*, as three Prophets plainly describe it, *Isa.* xxxiv. 6. *Jer.* xlix. 13. *Amos* i. 12. And one of these represents it also as a City of *Moab*: Because, as some think, it was in the Confines of both Countries: Or, rather, in the Opinion of *Bochartus*, there were two *Bozrah*'s; the one in *Idumaea*, the other in *Moab*.

Ver. 45. *And when Jobab was dead, Husbam of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his stead.*] We know nothing of *Husbam*, but he seems not to have been the Son of *Jobab*; but one of another Family, in another Part of the Country. Some take this *Jobab* to have been *Job*: Which Opinion is exploded by *Aben Ezra*.

Ver. 46. *And when Husbam was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad (which smote Midian in the Field of Moab) reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 35. where *R. Solomon* saith, the *Midianites* making War against the *Moabites*, this King of *Edom* came to help the *Moabites*.

Ver. 47. *And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 48. *And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river, reigned in his stead.*] See Gen. xxxvi. 37.

Ver. 49. *And when Shaul was dead, Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.*

Ver. 50. *And when Baalhanan was dead, Hadad (or Hadar) reigned in his stead: and the name*

name of his city was *Pai* (or *Pau*) and his wives name *Mebetabel*.] See *Gen.* xxxvi. 39.

The daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezabab.] Some of the *Jews* fancy this *Mezabab* to have been a very ingenious Woman, being the first that found out the Art of drawing Gold out into Wires or Threads: For *Zabab* signifies Gold in *Hebrew*. But the *LXX* take this for the Name of a Man, and translate it *ὁ Μαιζάβας*.

Ver. 51. *Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were duke Timna, duke Alia, duke Jetheth,*

Ver. 52. *Duke Abolibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,*

Ver. 53. *Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,*

Ver. 54. *Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: These are the dukes of Edom.*] After the Death of *Hadad*, the Form of Government was altered again: For there were no more Kings for a long Time; but they returned to the first Constitution, which they found, when they conquered the Country; which was governed by Dukes. See *Gen.* xxxvi. 40. And thus it was in *Israel* after they came into the Land of *Canaan*. They were first governed by Judges who had not kingly Power. After which from the Time of *Saul* they were governed by Kings till their Captivity. At their Return they had no more Kings, but only such Governors as *Zerobabel* was. Some have imagined that *Esau* was the first King of this Country: But in all Likelihood, if he was, he would have left his Son *Eliphaz* in the same Authority; who was but a Duke, *Gen.* xxxvi. 15, 16. Therefore *Esau* contented himself with that Form of Government which he found among the *Horites*: Which continued till *Bela* made himself King; ver. 43. The Difference between their Kings and Dukes was (as *Esthius* observes) that the former ruled absolutely, according to their Pleasure: The Power of the other was limited and bounded by certain prescribed Laws.

C H A P. II.

Verse 1. **T**hese are the sons of *Israel*; *Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.*

Ver. 2. *Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.*] He reckons up his first four Sons in the Order wherein they were born (*Gen.* xxix. 32, &c.) and next to them their two Brethren by the same Mother *Leah*, *Gen.* xxx. 18, 20. Afterward, I can give no Reason why *Dan* and *Naphtali* (the two Sons of *Bilhab*) are not mentioned together, and *Joseph* and *Benjamin* the two Sons of *Rachel*, and *Gad* and *Asher* the two Sons of *Zilpah*.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah:*] There is a plain Reason why the Genealogy of *Judah* is set down in the first Place; because this Tribe had obtained a Superiority and Preheminence among the rest, before the Time of *David*; ever since the Prophecy of *Jacob* in the Blessing he pronounced upon him, *Gen.* xlix. 10. For *Judah*, when they came into the Wilderness, was ordered to

march first, *Numb.* ii. 3. and accordingly we find they did, when they removed from Mount *Sinai*, *Numb.* x. 14. And when the Princes of the Tribes offered at the Dedication of the Altar, the Prince of the Tribe of *Judah* offered on the first Day, *Numb.* vii. 12. When they came into *Canaan*, they obtained of *Joshua* a Portion for *Caleb* without casting of any Lot, as there was in the dividing of the Land, *Josh.* xiv. 6. And when *Joshua* was dead, they were appointed by God to go up first against the *Canaanites*, to take from them what remained unconquered, *Judg.* i. 2. From *David's* Time every one knows, till the Captivity of *Babylon*, a kingly Power continued in this Tribe: And *Zerobabel* was of the same, who was their Leader when they returned to their own Land.

Which were born unto him of the daughter of Shuah the Canaanitefs.] See an Account of this in *Gen.* xxxviii. 2.

And Er the first-born of Judah was evil in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him.] See ver. 7. of the same Chapter. His second Son also, though he be not represented under so bad a Character, yet displeased God so much, that he slew him also, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 4. *And Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerab. All the sons of Judah were five.*] See there, ver. 29, 50.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul.*] Who were born unto him before they went into *Egypt*; *Gen.* xlvi. 12.

Ver. 6. *And the sons of Zerab; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.*] These were born after they came into *Egypt*; for there is no Mention of them in the Book of *Genesis*. And the *Jews* in *Seder Olani Rabba*, and in *Talkut* say, these Men prophesied when they were in *Egypt*: For they suppose them to be the same with those mentioned 1 *Kings* iv. 31. If they were, then *Zerab* had two Names, and was also called *Mahol*: But there is great Reason to think they were not the same, as I have shown in my Annotations there.

Ver. 7. *The sons of Carmi;*] This Man was the Son of *Zimri*: Who in *Josh.* vii. 18. is called *Zabdi*; for by Length of Time his Name might easily be thus altered. And, indeed, in copying proper Names, one might easily mistake.

Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing accursed.] He who is there called *Achan*, is here elegantly called *Achar*; which signifies Troubler: Because he had brought *Israel* into great Danger, by the Sin he committed in the accursed Thing. The Remembrance of this some thought fit he should carry in his Name: Which in Process of Time was changed, by common Use and Custom, from *Achan* into *Achar*. Which is more likely, than that there should be an Error here in the Transcriber. See *Bochart* in his *Hieroicoon*, P. 1. L. 2. cap. 31.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.*] Here is but one Son mentioned: But it is usual in Scripture to speak of a singular Person in the plural Number (*Gen.* xlvi. 23.) to include all his Descendants.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *The sons of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai.*] This Ram is mentioned in the Genealogy of our Saviour, *Matth. i. 3, 4.* and called *Aram*.

Ver. 10. *And Ram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Nahshon, the prince of the children of Judah;*] When they came out of Egypt, and pitched under their several Standards, *Numb. ii. 3.*

Ver. 11. *And Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,*

Ver. 12. *And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse.*] These three are the principal Persons in all this Genealogy, as *Pellicanus* observes; being put into the Genealogy of our Saviour, who was descended from David by these three great Ancestors.

Ver. 13. *And Jesse begat his first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shammah the third,*

Ver. 14. *Nathaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth.*]

Ver. 15. *Ozem the sixth, David the seventh.*] It is manifest from *1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11.* that Jesse had eight Sons: But some think one of them was only an adopted Son, and therefore not here mentioned: And they gather from *2 Sam. xxi. 2.* that his Name was *Jonathan*, by a Mistake; for that *Jonathan* was David's Nephew by his Brother *Shammah*. The truest Account therefore is, that one of Jesse's Sons was dead, before David came to the Kingdom. So *Rasi*.

Ver. 16. *Whose sisters were Zeruiab, and Abigail.*] Who were the Sisters of David last mentioned.

And the sons of Zeruiab; Abishai, and Joab, and Asabel, three.] Who were all eminent Commanders under David.

Ver. 17. *And Abigail bare Amasa:*] Another valiant Man, who was murdered by Joab.

And the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmeelite.] He was an *Ishmeelite* by Birth, but by Religion an *Israelite*: Or, as others will have it, he was born an *Israelite*, but bred so long among the *Ishmeelites*, that many called him by that Name. See *2 Sam. xvii. 25.* The Father of *Abishai*, *Joab* and *Asabel*, is no where mentioned; being not eminent, it seems, as this Jether was; but their Glory was by their Mother's Side.

Ver. 18. *And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children*] It is plain, this is not *Caleb*, whom *Moses* sent to search out the Land of *Canaan*; for he was the Son of *Jephunneh*, of whom he gives an Account below, *iv. 15.* This Man is called *Chelubai*, *ver. 9.* of this Chapter.

Of Azubah his wife,] It is an ungrounded Fancy of the *Talmudists*, in *Sota*; who say she was called *Azubab* (which signifies *forsaken*) because *Caleb* married her for the Love of God, when no body would have her.

And of Ferioth:] This is understood by *Conradus Pellicanus*, as if he had said, *that of his Wife Azubah he begat Ferioth*: For there is nothing in the Hebrew that answers to the Word *Children*.

Her sons are these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon.] That is, These were the Sons of *Ferioth*.

Ver. 19. *And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur.*]

This was a very continent Man, who had but one Wife at a Time; and loved *Azubab* so well, that he married no other while she lived. His second Wife also was of such Note, that gave Name to a Place in the Country of *Judah*; *ver. 24.*

Ver. 20. *And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel.*

Ver. 21. *And afterwards Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir,*] After the Death of *Ephrath*, I suppose, he married another Woman of an eminent Family.

The father of Gilead,] The Prince of the Country of *Gilead*; as the Word *Father* often signifies.

Whom he married when he was sixty years old, and she bare him Segub.

Ver. 22. *And Segub begat Fair,*] Who is called the Son of *Manasseh* in *Numb. xxxii. 41.* because his Grandmother was of that Tribe, the Daughter of *Machir*, the Son of *Manasseh*, *Numb. xx. 29.*

Who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.] In the Right of his Wife, as the common Opinion of the *Jewish* Doctors is: Who observe in Scripture two Instances of Husbands that inherited the Estate of their Wives, though in another Tribe. The first is in *Joshua xxiv. 33.* and the other in this Place. Where *Kimchi* notes, That this *Fair* the Son of *Segub*, took a Wife in the Land of *Gilead*, unto whom he succeeded as her Heir in her Possessions, when she was dead: These twenty-three Cities being her Inheritance. See *Selden De Successionibus ad Leges Hebr. cap. 18.*

Ver. 23. *And he took Gesur, and Aram, with the towns of Fair, from them,*] They were afterwards called by his Name, who conquered them, and took them from the neighbouring *Geshurites* and *Syrians*.

With Kenath, and the towns thereof, even threescore cities:] The Metropolis of which was *Kenath*: In the taking of which he employed a great Commander called *Nobah*, *Numb. xxxii. 42.* who, I suppose, was of the same Tribe and Family.

All these belonged to the sons of Machir, the father of Gilead.] His Posterity possessed these Towns.

Ver. 24. *And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah,*] This City was called after the Name of both Husband and Wife (*ver. 19.*) they being both famous Persons. And it was also called *Bethlehem*, from the Fruitfulness of the Place.

Then Abiah Hezrons wife bare him Ashur] He married her when he was very old (for he was threescore when he took his former Wife, *ver. 21.*) and died before the Child was born, whom he begat of her. The *Jews* look upon his marrying when he was so old, as proceeding from a great Desire of Posterity in the Family of *Pharez*, from whom the *Messiah* was to descend. The same we see in *Boaz*, who married *Ruth* when he was old.

The father of Tekoa.] Who gave Name to a famous Town in this Country, *2 Sam. xiv. 2.* *Jerem. iii. 6.*

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were, Ram the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Abijah.*

Ver. 26.

Ver. 26. *Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah, she was the mother of Onam.*] There being (according to our Translation of the foregoing Verse) Mention of his former Wife, it seems not to be unreasonable to take *Abijah* to have been the Mother of *Ram*, and the rest, which he had by *Abijah*. So the Words may be understood, supposing the Particle *Mem* to be wanting before *Abijah*.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.*

Ver. 28. *And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.*] He set not down the Names of the Children of *Jerahmeel*'s eldest Son, by his first Wife: But of both those he had by his second. The rest perhaps had no Children, as is noted afterwards of one of his Grandsons, ver. 30.

Ver. 29. *And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bare him Abham, and Molid.*] This, though the second Son, it seems, married first: And therefore his Children are mentioned before the other.

Ver. 30. *And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.*

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Appaim; Ishi.*] The plural Number is often used when one Son or Daughter only is spoken of (as I observed ver. 8.) for in that one all the Posterity are comprehended. The next Words are another Example of this.

And the sons of Ishi, Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ablai.] It is plain from ver. 34, and 35, that this *Ablai* was not a Son, but a Daughter.

Ver. 32. *And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai;*] Mentioned in ver. 28.

Jether, and Jonathin: and Jether died without children.] He had neither Son nor Daughter.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Jonathan; Pelez, and Zara. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.*] Whose Male Line he carries no farther: Because perhaps it failed in their last named.

Ver. 34. *Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters:*] We read of no more than one Daughter that he had: But he speaks in the plural Number, as before, ver. 31.

And Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.] Who being a Profelyte, it is probable, to the Jewish Religion, and a faithful Servant to his Master, he gave him his Freedom, and married his Daughter to him.

Ver. 35. *And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai.*] This Servant was very dear to him, and perhaps Ruler of his House, as *Eliezer* of *Damascus* was to *Abraham*: Who, if he had not had a Son, he looked upon as his Heir to all his Estate, Gen. xv. 23.

Ver. 36. *And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat Zabad,*

Ver. 37. *And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,*

Ver. 38. *And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,*

Ver. 39. *And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasab,*

Ver. 40. *And Eleasab begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,*

Ver. 41. *And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.*

We cannot now understand, why so long a Genealogy should be inserted here of the Descendants of *Sheshan*'s Daughter by an Egyptian. The Jews imagine it is the Genealogy of *Ismael* (who slew *Gedaliah*, whom the King of Babylon left the Governor of the Land after he had taken *Jerusalem*) who they fancy was the Son of *Nethaniah* the Son of *Elishama*, last mentioned (as *Jeremiah* describes him, ch. xli. 1.) which we might have believed, if this Genealogy had so concluded: In which, as there is no Mention of *Nethaniah*, as the Son of *Elishama* (but the Genealogy ends with *Elishama*, and goes no further) so it is not probable, that the Descent of so infamous a Person, though of the Seed-Royal, should be deduced thus largely.

Ver. 42. *Now the sons of Caleb*] Called *Chebulai*, ver. 9.

The brother of Jerahmeel] This is added to shew he speaks of the same *Caleb* there mentioned, and ver. 18.

Was Mesha his first-born,] By a third Wife; for his Children by *Azubah* and *Ephrath* are named before.

The father of Ziph:] The Prince of *Ziph*, as some understand it. There were two Places of this Name, in the Tribe of *Judah*. See *Josh.* xv. 24, 25.

And the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron.] *Hebron* here is the Name of a Man, not of a Place: For his Posterity are immediately mentioned: But *Kimchi* makes this to be the Sense of these and the foregoing Words; *the Sons of Ziph were Mareshah, the father of Hebron.* Which is very natural.

Ver. 43. *The sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.*

Ver. 44. *And Shema begat Raham, the father of Forkoam: and Rekem begat Shammai.*

Ver. 45. *And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Beth-zur.*] Who gave Name to a Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* xv. 58. Which *Josephus* saith was in the mountainous Part of it, as the Word imports. *Maon* also is a well known Name to a Wilderness in this Tribe.

Ver. 46. *And Ephah Calebs concubine bare Haran, and Mosa, and Gazez:*] Besides his fore-named Wives, he married a Concubine: Which was an inferior Sort of Wife, as I have shewn upon Gen. xxv. 6.

And Haran begat Gazez.] This is another *Gazez*; to whom *Haran* gave the Name of his younger Brother.

Ver. 47. *And the sons of Jabdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Gesban, and Pelct, and Ephah, and Shaaph.*] We read nothing of *Jabdai* in the foregoing Genealogy: But the Jews take him for one of the Sons of *Epha* before named; and most probably *Mosa*, next Brother to *Haran*: Whose Posterity is here set down, as *Haran*'s was before. *Mosa* therefore had two Names; which was not unusual among the Jews.

Ver. 48. *Maachab Caleb's concubine bare Sheber, and Tirhanah,*] This *Caleb* was a great Man, and could maintain many Wives; which he took, and had a numerous Issue by them.

Ver. 49. *She bare also Shaaph, the father of Madmannah, Shevah, the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeab :*] By the Word *Father* in this Verse; in all Likelihood, is meant the Prince or Ruler of these Places. For *Gibeab* was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*; and so was *Madmannah*, *Josh. xv. 31, 57.*

And the daughter of Caleb was Achsa.] Who is mentioned in the Books of *Joshua* and *Judges*: But it is not said by what Wife he had her. She was married to a great Man, *Othniel*, *Josh. xv. 17. Judges i. 12.*

Ver. 50. *These were the sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephrath;*] This was another *Caleb*, descended from the foregoing, by *Hur* his Son by *Ephrath*, ver. 19. who had this Son, whom he called *Caleb*, after the Name of his Grandfather.

Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim,] The *Targum* translates it the Prince of *Kirjath-jearim*: Which is a Place, as *Bethlehem*, and *Beth-gad* were, of which two other Persons are presently after said to be the Father. But *Kimchi* takes the Word *Father* in the proper Sense, and thinks *Shobal's* Posterity possessed the City of *Kirjath-jearim*.

Ver. 51. *Salma the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-gad.*] It is not material which Way we understand this; either as the *Targum*, or as *Kimchi* expounds the Word *Father* in the foregoing Verse.

Ver. 52. *Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons; Haroeb, and half of the Manabethites.*] The Hebrew Words being, *Haroeb, batzi, hammenioth*, the LXX expound them, as if *Shobal* had three Sons, *Araa*, and *Aisi*, and *Ammanith*. But *Kimchi* takes the last Word for the Name of a Place; which is evident from ver. 54. where the other Half of it is mentioned: And of one Half he thinks *Haroeb* was the Lord and Governour. But *Jacchiades* follows the LXX, and leaves *Kimchi's* Explication.

Ver. 53. *And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites :*] The Inhabitants of *Kirjath-jearim* were divided into several Families (as *Kimchi* interprets it) and these here mentioned were the Heads of Families, denominated from *Ithra* or *Jether*, and *Puhab*, &c. as from *Jimna* came the Family of the *Jimmities*, and from *Beriah* the Family of the *Berites*, in *Numb. xxvi. 44.*

Of them came the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites.] The same *Kimchi* observes, that *Zarah* and *Eshtaul* were two Cities in the Tribe of *Judah*; which were built by two of *Kirjath-jearim* of this Name. Who inhabited these Places, and left two great Families, who were from them called *Zareathites*, and *Eshtaulites*.

Ver. 54. *And the sons of Salmah, Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, and the house of Joab, and half of the Manabethites, and the Zorites.*] This *Salma* the Son of *Caleb* the younger (ver. 51.) had a numerous Posterity. For from him descended the Inhabitants of *Bethlehem* (so we are to understand this Word, for *Bethlehem* was the Name of a Place, not of a Man) the *Netophathites*, and those of *Ataroth*, and *Beth-joab* (so these Words we translate the House of *Joab*, should be rendered; for he is not

speaking of *Joab's* Family, but of *Caleb's*) and Half of the *Manabethites*, and the *Zorites*, who were a People possessed of a Town called *Zorah*: Where the other Half dwelt.

Ver. 55. *And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez;*] This Place, *Kimchi* thinks, might possibly be built by *Jabez* (an honourable Person, mentioned *ch. iv. 9.*) in which some Doctors of the Law dwelt, who were of the Family of *Salma*; for of these he is still speaking.

The Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These are the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab.] These *Kenites*, as *R. Solomon* thinks, were the Inhabitants of a Place called *Can* in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh. xv. 57.* Though it must be acknowledged also, some of the *Kenites*, the Posterity of *Jethro*, did settle in the same Tribe (*Judges i. 16.*) of whom some think *Ezra* here speaks. And then *Hemath* descended from *Jethro*, who was the Father; that is, the Prince of *Beth-Rechab*: So the last Words may be understood. There were other *Kenites* descended from *Heber*, who dwelt in the Tribe of *Naphthali*, or *Manasseh*, *Judges iv. 11.*

CHAP. III.

Verse 1. **N**OW these were the sons of David,] Having given a large Account of the Posterity of *Hezron*, he returns to *David* before-mentioned, *ch. ii. 15.*

Which were born unto him in Hebron;] Before he was King of all *Israel*.

The first-born Amnon, of Akinoam the Jeshreelitess: The second Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess :] This second Son is called *Chileab*, in *2 Sam. iii. 3.* where I have given an Account of it. And here it may be noted, once for all, that it was a frequent Thing among the *Jews* for Men to have two Names; especially when they lived sometimes in one Country, and sometimes in another. This appears from a famous Case mentioned in the *Gemara* of *Codex Gittin*, where it is resolved, that if a Man have two Wives, one in *Judea*, and another in *Galilee*; and he gave a Bill of Divorce to her in *Judea*, subscribing to it his Name whereby he is known in *Galilee*, the Bill is void. And in like Manner, if he write his Name whereby he goes in *Judea*, unto a Bill of Divorce to his Wife in *Galilee*, it is of no Effect.

Ver. 2. *The third, Absalom the son of Maachab, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur: the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith :*

Ver. 3. *The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the sixth, Ithream of Eglah his wife.*] This *Eglah* is generally thought by the *Jews* to be *Michal* Daughter of *Saul* (see my Notes upon *2 Sam. iii. 5.*) who, some think, is peculiarly called his Wife; because she was his only legal Wife, according to the Divine Institution: All the rest he took by Custom them reigning.

Ver. 4. *These six were born to him in Hebron, and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty three years.*] This hath been explained in *2 Sam. 5.*

Ver. 5. *And these were born to him in Jerusalem, Shimeah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solo-*

mon, four, of Bathshua daughter of Ammiel:] In 2 Sam. xi. 3. she is called *Bathsheba* (as she is through the whole Scripture) and her Father *Eliam*. But I observed just now, it was usual among the *Jews* to have two Names: Though there is no great Difference in this first of these, no more than there is between *Shammah* and *Shimea*; the Vowels being only changed, not the Consonants, of which the Names consist. *Solomon* was the eldest of these four Sons: But he is mentioned last, because the Discourse was to return to his Genealogy, ver. 10.

Ver. 6. *Ibhar also, and Elishama, and Eliphelet,]* There is a small Difference in the Name of the second of these, as he is mentioned 2 Sam. v. 15. where he is called *Elishua*.

Ver. 7. *And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

Ver. 8. *And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet,]* Two of these Names are mentioned before; who, it is supposed, died in their Infancy: And therefore he preserved their Memory, by giving their Names unto two others, who were born afterwards, and lived longer. So *Kimchi*.

Nine.] Besides the four born of *Bathsheba* (ver. 5.) but there are only seven mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 16. those two who died early being there omitted. See my Notes on that Place.

Ver. 9. *These were all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines,]* Who are not mentioned, either here or in *Samuel*.

And Tamar their sister.] See 2 Sam. xiii. 1.

Ver. 10. *And Solomons son was Rehoboam, Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehosaphat his son,*

Ver. 11. *Joram his son, Abaziah his son, Josiah his son,*

Ver. 12. *Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son,*

Ver. 13. *Abaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,*

Ver. 14. *Amon his son, Josiah his son.*

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Josiah were, the first-born Johanan,]* There is nothing needs explaining in the foregoing Genealogy down from *Solomon* to this Time: But here is some Difficulty: For this *Johanan* is thought by many to be the same with *Jehoahaz*, who succeeded *Josiah* in the Throne. But he was not his first-born; being but twenty-three Years old when the People made him King, and after three Months Time his Brother being put in his Place, is said to be twenty-five Years old, 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 36. *Petavius* hath said a great deal about this, in his *Annotations* upon *Epiphanius ad Heres. Epicur.* p. 18. But after all, I take the Truth to be, that *Johanan* was his eldest Son, but died before his Father: And therefore is not mentioned in the Book of the *Kings*: As *Jehoahaz* is not mentioned here, being made King by the People of the Land, and presently de-throned.

The second Jehoiaquim,] Who was next to him, to whom by Right of Succession the Kingdom belonged: He being the eldest now *Johanan* was dead. He was called by his Father *Eliakim*: But had this other Name imposed on him by the King of *Egypt*, 2 Kings xxiii. 34.

The third Zedekiah,] Who was the youngest of all *Josiah's* Sons, as appears by his Age, when he was made King after *Jehoiaquim* was carried captive. The same *Petavius* thinks there were

two *Zedekiahs*: One the Son of *Josiah*, who was their last King; the other the Son of *Jeconiah* (mentioned in the next Verse) who never came to be King.

The fourth Shallum.] This was the next Son to *Jehoiaquim*; and the same with *Jehoahaz*, as is plain from *Jerem.* xxii. 11. See my Notes upon 2 Kings xxii. 30, 31. He is put last, because he was not at all considerable; being made King by a popular Faction; and in three Months Time thrust out of his Throne by the King of *Egypt*, who carried him thither, and there he died.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehoiaquim; Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.]* The Posterity of *Jeconiah* are set down in the next Verse: And therefore here by the Word *Son* we must understand his Successor in the Kingdom. Thus *Seneca* makes *Atreus* and *Tantalus* to be Descendants of *Inachus*; because they succeeded him in the Kingdom of *Argos*. And in like manner *Jacobus Capellus* here observes (in his *Histor. Sacra & exotica, ad A. M.* 3424.) that *Multi filii dicuntur, qui legaliter tantum erant filii, id est, heredes*: Many are called Sons, who were only Sons legally, that is, Heirs. Of which he makes *Zedekiah* an Example, who is here called the Son of *Jeconiah* (who was his Uncle, 2 Kings xxiv. 17.) because he succeeded him.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Salathiel his son,]* Some think *Assir* is not the Name of his Son, but signifies *Captive*: To denote, that his Son *Salathiel* was born when he was a Captive in *Babylon*, as *St Matthew* notes, ch. i. 12. which doth not contradict the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, who said he should die childless, *Fer.* xxii. 30. for his Meaning is no more, but that he should have no Child sitting on the Throne after him. But *Jacobus Capellus*, in the Place forenamed, makes *Salathiel* another Instance of an Heir being called a Son. For he thinks he succeeded *Jeconiah* in the Dignity to which he was restored by *Evilmerodach*: But was the Son of *Neri*, who sprung from *Nathan*.

Ver. 18. *Malchiram also, and Pedaiab, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.]* These were not all the immediate Sons of *Jeconiah*, but the Sons of *Salathiel*; as may be gathered from hence; that in the next Verse *Zerubbabel* is said to be the Son of *Pedaiab*, and in *St Matthew* (ch. i. 12.) to be the Son of *Salathiel*; that is, his Grandson. So there is something to be supplied, to make out the Sense of this Verse, viz. *The sons also of Salathiel were Malchiram, and Pedaiab, &c.* But *Grotius* (on *Matth.* i. 23.) thinks, that *Zerubbabel* here mentioned is not he, who was the Leader of God's People when they returned from their Captivity in *Babylon*: With whom *Huetius* also agrees. But others think, this may better be solved by supposing, that *Salathiel* dying without Children, *Pedaiab* raised up Seed to his Brother, as the Scripture speaks, and begat *Zerubbabel* of *Salathiel's* Wife. Who therefore was the Son of *Pedaiab*, because begotten by him: And yet the Son of *Salathiel*, because begotten of his Wife; who had no Son by *Salathiel*, but by *Pedaiab*; who begat him not to be his Heir, but the Heir of his Brother who was dead.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Pedaiab were, Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Mesbullam, and Hananiab, and Shalomith their sister:]* That is, Sister to the two Sons before-named; she having the same Father and Mother that they had: Which the other five mentioned in the next Verse, it is supposed, had not; but were by another Mother, though they had the same Father.

Ver. 20. *And Hashubab, and Obel, and Berechiab, and Hasadiab, Jushab-besed, five.]* Upon this they ground their Opinion, who think the Zerubbabel here mentioned, is not he that was the Governour of the People after the Captivity: For his Son's Name was Rhesa, Luke iii. 27. who is not found among the eight Children, that are here reckoned up.

Ver. 21. *And the sons of Hananiab; Pelatiab, and Jesaiab:]* These are the Sons of the second son of Zerubbabel, ver. 19.

The sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiab, the sons of Shecaniah.] These four (and their Sons) seem to have been likewise the Children of Hananiab.

Ver. 22. *And the sons of Shecaniah; Shenaiab: and the sons of Shemaiah; Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.]* Here are but five Sons of Shemaiah: And therefore the Hebrew Word *Shishbak* (which we translate *six*) is rather the Name of his last Son: Who might possibly be so called, because he was his sixth Son.

Ver. 23. *And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiab, and Azrikam, three.]* The rest of Shemaiah's Sons had no Issue.

Ver. 24. *And the sons of Elioenai were Hodaiab, and Eliashib, and Pelaiab, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiab, and Anani, seven.]* The Targum here hath a very strange Observation: For after the Word *Anani*, he saith, *He is the king MESSIAH, who is to be revealed.* The Reason of which is given in the famous Book *Tanchuma* (as *Beckius* here notes) because it is said in *Dan. vii. 13.* he saw in a Vision, and behold one like the Son of Man, *im anani* (in the Clouds) which certainly was a Vision of the Messiah, as *Saadis Gaon* acknowledges. And this Use is to be made of this Passage, that their Minds were always full of the Thoughts of the Messiah, and that they expected he should be revealed (as they speak) so many Generations after Zerubbabel: Which is an Argument he came long ago. St *Matthew* indeed counts more Generations from Zerubbabel to our Saviour's Birth than are here mentioned, and hath quite different Names in this Succession: Which is another Argument, that this Zerubbabel in the *Chronicles* is not the same with him in St *Matthew*. And, indeed though some Persons in Scripture have two Names, yet it is not likely that so many Persons as are reckoned in this Succession, should all have quite different Names. Therefore St *Matthew's* Genealogy is not here recorded: But he had it out of the publick Tables, which were kept by the Priests of all the great Families of Judah; particularly that of David's, out of whose Family they expected the Messiah should come, would not fail to keep a punctual Account of his Successors in every Generation.

C H A P. IV.

Verse 1. **T**HE sons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.] By the Sons of Judah are meant his Posterity: For here is only one of his Sons mentioned in this Place; viz. Pharez: Whose Son Hezron begat Carmi (the same with Calubai and Caleb (ch. ii. 9, 18.) whose Sons were Hur, and Shobab: Who is the same, I suppose, with Shobal; of whose Posterity he intends here to give an Account.

Ver. 2. *And Reaiab the son of Shobal begat Jabath, and Jabath begat Abumai, and Labad. These are the families of the Zorathites.]* Zora is not the Name of a Man, but of a Place in the Tribe of Judah: Where several Families of that Tribe settled themselves, who were descended from Jabath, Shumai, and Labad, the Sons and Grandsons of Shobal; by whom this City was built and inhabited. Thus *Kimchi* explains this Place.

Ver. 3. *And these were of the father of Etam:]* Descended from the Lord of a Place called Etam: Which was in this Tribe, ver. 32.

Jezreel, and Ishma and Idbash:] These were the Sons of the Lord of Etam: Whose Name is not here recorded.

And the name of their sister was Hazelelponi.] Who it is likely was a very eminent Woman: And therefore her Name is remembred; though now we are ignorant of the particular Reason there was then for it.

Ver. 4. *And Penuel the father of Gedor:]* In the eighteenth Verse of this Chapter, *Jered* is said to be the Father, that is the Lord of Gedor. But there might be then two Lords of the same City; as there are now among us several Lordships in the same Town.

And Ezer the father of Hushab. These are the sons of Hur,] By some other Wife than her, by whom he had the Children mentioned Chapter the second, ver. 20.

The first-born of Ephratab,] See there, ver. 19.

The father of Bethlehem.] In the second Chapter, ver. 52. *Salma* is said to be the Father of Bethlehem: But that doth not contradict this: For they might both be Lords of the same Place, especially one being the Gandfather, the other the Son.

Ver. 5. *And Ashur the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah. See Chapter the second, ver. 24.*

Ver. 6. *And Naarah bare him Abuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.]* His first Wife being barren for some Time, it moved him to take another: Who bare him these Sons.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Helah were Zereth, and Jezoar, and Etbnai.]* Afterwards his first Wife grew fruitful, and bare him as many Sons as the other. For it is probable that Coz (mentioned in the next Words) was her Son.

Ver. 8. *And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel, the son of Harum.]* I suppose several Families sprung from Aharhel, who was the Son of Coz by his Wife Harum.

Ver. 9. *And Jabez*] It is very uncertain who *Jabez* was. Perhaps the Founder of one of the Families of *Abarhel*. But the *Targum* both here and upon *ch. ii. 55.* saith, he was the same with *Othniel*. But this is a Jewish Fancy, confuted by *ver. 13*:

Was more honourable than his brethren :] Wi-fer in the Law, as the *Targum* expounds it : Who had respect, it is likely, to his Piety and Devotion expressed in the next *Verse*. Others think he was a Person of greater Courage and Valour, for which *Othniel* was famous.

And his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bare him with sorrow.] She had a very hard Labour, when she was in Travail with him.

Ver. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast,*] He prayed for the Help of God, to drive out the *Canaanites*, and make room for his Family ; that they might dwell more commodiously.

And that thy hand might be with me,] As it was with *Othniel*, to enable him to take *Kirjath-sepher*, as we read in the first of *Judges*.

And that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me.] Preserve him in Health, and prosper him, when he had enlarged his Border : That he might not live in such Misery, as that wherewith his Mother brought him forth. For in the Word *grieve*, most think he alludes to the Pains of his Mother in her Travail.

And God granted him that which he requested.] And the rather, because he had hereby greater Leisure for the Study of the Law, and instructing others in Piety, as many understand it. For the *Jews* think this *Jabez* was an eminent Doctor of the Law, and left behind him a great many Disciples, who are mentioned, they suppose, in the last *Verse* of the second Chapter of this Book ; where we read of the Family of the Scribes that dwelt at *Jabez*.

Ver. 11. *And Chelub the brother of Shuah, begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton.*

Ver. 12. *And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nabash. These are the men of Rechab.*] The Persons whose Posterity possessed the City of *Rechab* : Of which we have no mention elsewhere.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Kenaz* :] It is not said whose Son he was : It is likely of *Chelub*, mentioned *ver. 11*.

Othniel, and Seraiah : and the sons of Othniel ; Hatbath.] And likewise *Meonothai*, mentioned in the next *Verse* : For after his Sons follow the Sons of *Othniel's* younger Brother.

Ver. 14. *And Meonothai begat Ophrah : and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim,*] Or, of those that dwelt in *Gecharashim* : Which was a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, mentioned in *Nehem. xi. 35*.

For they were craftsmen.] The Smiths that dwelt and wrought there, gave it the Name of *Charashim* : By which Word some understand *Carpenters*. For in this Catalogue several such like Sort of Persons are mentioned : Such as Porters, and Weavers, and Gardiners, *ver. 21, 23*. For Societies cannot consist only of one Sort of Persons : but must be composed of Men of different and various Employ-

ments. As *Strigelius* observes out of *Aristotle*, *A City is not composed of Physicians and Physicians ; but of Physicians and Ploughmen*. So the Son of *Sirach* discourses, that though such kind of Men are not fit to be admitted to Counsel, yet they maintain the State of the World, *Ecclus. xxxviii. 34*. When *Solomon* indeed began to reign, there were not many Craftsmen in *Israel* ; but afterwards they increased : And such Honour was paid unto Arts, that they took Care to preserve the Memory of such Persons and Families as applied themselves that Way ; as appears by this very *Verse*, and *ver. 21, 23*, of this Chapter : Whence the Prophet *Isaiah* foretels this as a Judgment God would send upon them, that he would take away their *Artificers* ; *ch. iii. 5*. And when *Jerusalem* was taken by the *Babylonians*, it is said, they carried away all the craftsmen, *2 Kings xxiv. 14*.

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh ; Iru, Elah, and Naam* :] Some take this *Jephunneh* to be the same with *Hezrom*, whose Son *Caleb* was : And had this Son by a different Wife from her mentioned, *ch. ii. 18*.

And the sons of Elah, even Kenaz.] Or rather *Uknaz* was the Son of *Elah* : As some of the *Jews* understand it.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehaleleel* :] Who was the Son of *Uknaz* last mentioned.

Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ezra*] Who was the Son of *Asareel* last named.

Were Jether, and Mered, and Ephraim, and Jalon : and she bare] That is, *Bitiah* the Wife of *Mered* (mentioned in the next *Verse*) bare the Sons following.

Miriam, and Shammai,] *Miriam* was the Name of a Man, as well as of a Woman : And there are several such instances in Scripture, as *Kimchi* observes on this place.

And Ishbabb the father of Eshtemoa.] It is uncertain whether *Eshtemoa* be the Name of a Person, or of a Place whereof he was Lord.

Ver. 18. *And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered*] *Mered* had this Son by another Wife called *Jehudijah*.

The father of Geder, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.] The *Targum*, and *Jarchi*, with others, by *Father*, in all these three Instances, understand the Lord or Ruler of those cities, which were in the Tribe of *Judah*. See *Josh. xv. 34, 35*.

And these are the sons of Bitiah,] Mentioned in the foregoing *Verse*.

The daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.] That is married. But it is not likely he married the Daughter of the Kings of *Egypt*, unless some natural Daughter : But rather of some other Person, called by the Name of *Pharaoh* ; who might be an *Israelite* as well as an *Egyptian* : Names being, upon several Occasions, given from other Countries.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of his wife Hodiab,*] This was his third Wife.

The sister of Nabam,] It seems to me more reasonable to translate it *Achotnaam* : Who was his Son by *Hodiab*.

The father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.] These were his Grandsons, who are frequently in Scripture called Sons.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Shimon*] Who is supposed to be another Son of Mered by his last Wife.

Were Annon, and Rinnah, Ben-banan, and Tilon.

And the sons of Ishi] Who is thought to be the Son of Tilon last mentioned.

Were Zobeth, and Ben-zobeth.

Ver. 21. *The sons of Shelah, the son of Judah, were Er.*] Having given an account of those descended from Pharez the eldest Son of Judah, and Zerab whom Judah had by Tamar, (ch. ii. 4, 5.) he now relates the Posterity of Shelah, whom he had by his Wife Shuah, Gen. xxxviii. 5.

The father of Lecab,] This was a City in the Tribe of Judah, of which Er was the Lord.

And Laadah the father of Marehab,] Another City in the same Tribe.

And the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen,] From him came all those Families that were famous for this Sort of Workmanship in fine Linen: Wherewith their Kings and Priests were clothed, as the Targum notes.

Of the house of Ashbea,] The Principal of which, I suppose, were those of this Man's Posterity.

Ver. 22. *And Jokim,*] This was either a Person, or a Family descended from Shelah.

And the men of Chozeba,] They were another Family sprung from the same Root: Who settled in this Place.

And Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab,] Conquered several Places there, in the Time of David: Or had the Government of them given by him. The Targum takes the Hebrew Word *Baalu*, as if it signified that they married Wives in the Country of Moab.

And Jashubi-lehem.] Or rather, *The Inhabitants of Lehem*: A Place where some of Shelah's Posterity settled.

And these are antient things.] That is, these things which have been related concerning Joash and Saraph (as Kimchi interprets it) who had Dominion in Moab, shew that they were long ago: But now, as it follows, their condition was altered.

Ver. 23. *These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges:*] Or rather, *these now are potters, &c.* being fallen from the Glory and Splendor wherein they formerly lived, to common and mean Employments.

There they dwelt with the king for his work.] This is commonly understood, as if they stayed in Babylon (for there was no King now in Judea) to be Vine-dressers, Gardeners, and Husbandmen, under that Monarch: Whose service they liked so well, that they chose to continue in it, rather than return to Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. *The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, and Jamin, Jarib, Zerab, and Shaul:*] This Tribe is mentioned next to Judah, because they were Neighbours to them: Part of their Possessions being taken out of the Tribe of Judah, Josh. xix. 1, &c. But the Names of some of Simeon's Sons were much altered, by length of Time, from what they were when they went down into Egypt, Gen. xlv. 10. And Obad, there men-

tioned, is not here remembered: Because it is likely, he had no Issue.

Ver. 25. *Shallum his son,*] That is, he was the Son of Shaul, last mentioned.

Mibsam his son, Mibma his son.

Ver. 26. *And the sons of Mibma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.*] It seems Mibsam had no Son.

Ver. 27. *And Shimei had sixteen sons, and six daughters;*] The Posterity of his eldest Sons are taken Notice of: But only, as it follows, that they had not many.

But his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, like to the children of Judah.] Which evidently appears by the Number that was taken of them at their first Muster, Numb. i. 23. where we find that they were but fifty-nine thousand and three hundred: When the Children of Judah were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred, ver. 26. And at the next Muster there was a far greater inequality, Numb. xxvi. 14, 22.

Ver. 28. *And they dwelt at Beersheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-Shual,* These Places are mentioned in Josh. xix. 2, 3.

Ver. 29. *And at Bilhab,*] Called Balah, in the Place above-named.

And at Ezem, and at Tolad,] These are called Azem, and Eshtolad, the former Part of Names being oft cut off; as Hermon for Baal-Hermon, Judg. iii. 3. Sittim, Numb. xxv. 1. for Abel-Sittim, Numb. xxvi. 49, &c.

Ver. 30. *And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag,*] See there, ver. 4, 5.

Ver. 31. *And at Beth-marcaboth, and at Hazar-susim,*] Called there (Josh. xix. 5.) Hazar-Susab.

And at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim:] The Names are different in Josh. xix. 6.

These were their cities, unto the reign of David.] Who, the Jews fancy, took these cities from them, and gave them again to Judah. Which is not likely, nor doth the Word *unto* denote that they held them no longer, than till the Reign of David: But that when he came to the Crown their Families dwelt here; though Ziklag had been in the Possession of the Philistines, who gave it to David, as his own Town.

Ver. 32. *And their villages were Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Asban,*] Here is one Place mentioned, more than is in Josh. xix. 7. which they had some way acquired since his days.

Ver. 33. *And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal.*] Called Baalath-Beer, Josh. xix. 8.

These were their habitations, and their genealogy.] Or, as it is in the Margin, *they divided themselves by nations among them;* i. e. among these Places.

Ver. 34. *And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshab the son of Amaziab.*] These, and the rest that follow, seem to have been very eminent Persons in this tribe: By whose Valour these great Things were performed, which are mentioned, ver. 38, 39, &c. There is so great a resemblance in the Name, that some fancy the Name *Ἰαμελὶχ* among the Greeks came from this Name Jamlech.

Ver. 35. *And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josiab, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel.*

Ver. 36. *And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Gesbobiab, and Asaiab, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah.*

Ver. 37. *And Zirza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiak, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah.*

Ver. 38. *These mentioned by their names]* Whose Names are mentioned in the four foregoing Verses.

Were princes in their families :] Great Persons of chief authority in their several Families.

And the house of their fathers increased exceedingly;] By their Valour they enlarged the Habitations; which were too strait for them.

Ver. 39. *And they went to the entrance of Gedor,]* There was a Place of this Name belonging unto Judah, Josh. xv. 58. and another called *Gederab*, appertaining to the same Tribe, ver. 36. out of which perhaps Judah had not driven the old Inhabitants: And therefore the Simeonites wanting Room, went thither, and by dispossessing them, enlarged their Border. But see the next Verse, which places *Geder* elsewhere.

Even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.] For their Sheep and their Goats: Which are properly meant by Flocks.

Ver. 40. *And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable:]* So that they might feed their Flocks securely.

For they of Ham had dwelt there of old.] This had inclined Bochart to think, that Gedor was some Place in Arabia; where some of the Posterity of Ham settled, as he hath demonstrated. And the Arabians being wholly addicted to Pasturage, sought out the best Ground they could find for the Feeding their Flocks. Whose Country the Simeonites made no scruple to invade; the Posterity of Ham being accursed by Noah. See his *Phaleg*. L. 4. Cap. 1.

Ver. 41. *And these written by name, came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah,]* Their Names are set down before, (ver. 34, 35, 36, 37.) now the Time is recorded wherein they performed such memorable Exploits; which was in the Reign of Hezekiah King of Judah. That is, as some take it, a little before the ten Tribes were carried captive: Or, rather, some Time after it, when these Simeonites who were mixed with Judah, finding themselves very much straitned, made this expedition.

And smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there,] If they smote their Tents, then it was sufficiently evident, they smote their Habitations; for they dwelt in Tents. Therefore the Word *Meunim*, I have shewn upon Judges x. 12. (see my Notes there) doth not signify Habitations, but a People in Arabia, who dwelt in Tents: Which the Simeonites smote, as it here follows, and settled themselves in their Place.

And destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms:] There was none remained to attempt the Recovery of their Country any more: But the Simeonites possessed it when

this Book was written, after the Captivity of Babylon.

Because there was pasture there for their flocks.] Which made them seek for no other Settlement.

Ver. 42. *And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captain Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.]* Another Body of them under these four great Commanders, who were Brethren, settled themselves in some Part of the Country of the Edomites: Being forced to seek for subsistence abroad; either when the Assyrians invaded their Country, or afterwards when it was destroyed, and there was not room enough for them among the Jews; whither many of them fled.

Ver. 43. *And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped,]* Who escaped the Hands of Saul, and of David.

And dwelt there unto this day.] The King of Babylon did not disturb them in these new Possessions: Which were small, and not worth his regard.

CHAP. V.

Verse 1. **N**OW the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel (for he was the first-born; but forasmuch as he defiled his fathers bed, his birthright was given unto Joseph the son of Israel:)] The double Portion, which was the Right of the First-born, (Deut. xxi. 16, 17.) was given to Joseph: Whose two sons had each of them a Lot in the land of Canaan; as if they had been the Sons of Israel. The Jewish Doctors say there were two other Prerogatives belonging to the First-born, viz. the *Principality* and the *Priesthood*: The former of which was given to Judah, the latter to Levi. But I see no Ground to think the Priesthood was annexed to it: And as for the other, it is taken notice of in the following Verse.

And the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birth-right.] This is the reason why neither Reuben's, nor Joseph's Genealogy is first set down: For though the double Portion belonged to the First-born; yet he had not therefore the Preheminence in other things, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *For Judah prevailed above his brethren,]* That is, the Tribe of Judah, (not his Person) which was the most powerful, and in all things, as I before shewed, preferred to the rest.

And of him came the chief ruler,] This is the principal Reason, why he prevailed, because the great Prince of the People was to arise out of this Tribe: First David, and at last the MESSIAH.

But the birth-right was Joseph's)] Or though the Birth-right was Joseph's; yet, for the Reason before-mentioned, Judah's Genealogy is first set down.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, were Hanoch, and Pallu, and Hezron, and Garmi.]* See Gen. xvi. 19.

Ver. 4. *The sons of Joel;]* Who, it is likely, was the Son of Hanoch the eldest Son of Reuben: Because

Because it appears from *ver. 6.* that he here gives an account of the chief Persons of this Tribe; and consequently those who were descended from the First-born.

Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,

Ver. 5. Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son,

Ver. 6. Beerah his son,] Whom the Targum takes for a Prophet, the Father of *Hosea*, who is called *Beer*, *Hosea* i. 1. But that is a meer Fancy; for that Prophet was of the Tribe of *Issachar*, but this *Beerah* of the Tribe of *Reuben*.

Whom Tilgath-Pileser king of Assyria, carried away captive out of their own land:] He is called *Tiglath-Pileser*, 2 Kings xv. 29.

He was prince of the Reubenites.] When the two Tribes and half were carried away captive out of their own Country beyond *Jordan*, by the King of *Assyria*, viz. *Tiglath* before mentioned. The rest were carried away by *Salmanesser*.

Ver. 7. And his brethren by their families (when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned) were the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,] The Genealogies of those descended from the rest of *Reuben's* Sons, were preserved: But he thought fit to mention only the chief of them, who were these two, and those that follow.

Ver. 8. And Bela the son of Azab, the son of Shema, the son of Joel,] This was another *Joel*, different from him mentioned *ver. 4.*

Who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo, and Baal-meon.] All these were seated on the other Side of *Jordan*, see *Numb. xxxii. 37. Josh. xiii. 15, 16, &c.* where we read of this City *Baal-meon*.

Ver. 9. And eastward he inhabited] That is the Posterity of *Reuben*.

Unto the entering in of the wilderness] This is the Wilderness of *Kedemoth*, mentioned *Deut. ii. 28.* upon which the Country of *Sihon* (which *Reuben* possessed) bordered.

From the river Euphrates:] Their Territory did not reach so far as *Euphrates*: But only to the Entrance of that Wilderness, which extended itself to that River.

Because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.] When their Stock very much increased, so that they had not Pasturage enough for them, they enlarged their Border, as far as they were able, Eastward toward the River *Euphrates*.

Ver. 10. And in the days of Saul they made war] With the Assistance of other Tribes that dwelt on that side *Jordan*, *ver. 18, 19.*

With the Hagarites,] That is, the *Ismaelites* descended from *Hagar*; who were settled in *Arabia Deserta*. See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*. L. 4. cap. 11.

Who fell by their hands:] Were conquered by them in that War: So that, as it here follows, they possessed their Country.

And they dwelt in their tents] This shews they were *Arabians*; or near Neighbours to them.

Throughout all the east-land of Gilead.] They possessed all that Country, which lay East of *Gilead*: Which chiefly belonged to the *Gadites*

and *Manassites*, though the *Reubenites* had some of it, *Deut. iii. 12, 13.* A very learned Man of our own is of opinion, that these *Hagarenes* inhabited the Country called *Petra Nabatæa*. See *Dr Fuller's Miscellanea Sacra*, L. ii. cap. 13. where he observes, that all the rest, who were called *Ismaelites* or *Kedar*, were afterwards comprehended under the Name of *Saracens*.

Ver. 11. And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of Basban, unto Salcab:] See *Josh. xiii. 24, 25, &c.* He next mentions the *Gadites*, because they were Neighbours to the *Reubenites*.

Ver. 12. Joel the chief, and Shapham next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Basban.] He doth not give us the Genealogy of this whole tribe, but only the names of the principal Persons; among whom these were the most eminent, when their Genealogy was examined: Which seems to have been in the Reign of *Jotham*, *ver. 17.* All these dwelt, I suppose, in the Metropolis of the Country called *Basban*: Where the chief City was called by the same name: And afterwards called *Batanæa*.

Ver. 13. And their brethren of the house of their fathers were, Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.] These seven were eminent Persons descended from other great men of the same Family with those before-named: And therefore are called their Brethren.

Ver. 14. These are the children of Abihail the son of Huri,] That is, the seven before-mentioned, came from *Abihail*; whose Pedigree here follows.

The son of Jeraob, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jachdo, the son of Buz;

Ver. 15. Abi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.] Besides the foregoing, there was another great Person who was of chief Authority, in the Family of *Abdiel* and *Guni*, and their Fathers.

Ver. 16. And they dwelt in Gilead in Basban,] In a Part of it; the rest being given to the *Reubenites* and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*. See *Josh. xiii. 25. xvii. 1. Deut. iii. 13.* where it is said *Moses* gave all *Basban* to the *Manassites*: But the Meaning is, all that was not given to the other two Tribes who had a Share therein. See what I have noted upon *Deut. iii. 13.*

And in her towns,] That is, such Towns as belonged to that Portion of the Country which they possessed.

And in all the suburbs of Sharon,] A Country where there was excellent Pasturage, and which produced the most generous Wine. There was two *Sharon's*, one in the East inhabited by the *Gadites*, *Deut. iii. 12, 13.* another in the West, *Josh. xii. 17, 18.* not far from the famous Port called *Joppa*, *Acts ix. 35.*

Upon their borders.] Unto the utmost Bound (as the Hebrew Words signify) of that Country.

Ver. 17. All these were reckoned by genealogies, in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.] This doth not imply that *Jotham* and *Jeroboam* reigned in the same Time: But that in their several Reigns this Account was taken. *Kimchi* thinks that

that all these (i. e. the Children of Reuben, the Children of Gad, and half Tribe of Manasseh) were reckoned, that were list'd to undertake the War afterward mentioned, with the Hagarens : So that it may not concern the Genealogy.

Ver. 18. *The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valient men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.]* These three Tribes, or at least so many of them as made a great Army, joined their Forces together, consisting of their best Soldiers, to invade the Country of the Hagarites. This seems to be a distinct War from that in the Days of Saul, ver. 10. See 1 Sam. xiv. 47.

Ver. 19. *And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab.]* There was mention of the Hagarites before, but now he shews how they were utterly expelled their Country, though their Neighbours came to their Assistance; viz. those of Jetur, Nephish, and Nodab : Who were all Ishmaelites; the two first being expressly mentioned as the Sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. from whom these People took their Name. But, as Dr Jackson observes, there are no People mentioned in Scripture, who took their Name from Nebaioth his eldest Son. Which makes it probable, that they who in Heathen Writers are called Nabathæi, were in Scripture called Ishmaelites, as sole Heirs to their first Progenitor's Name. Their Seat was in the best Part of Arabia Petrea, near to the Midianites. See Book i. on the Creed, Chap. 25. Sect. 3. where he notes, that the Greek Writers call the Hagarites Αγαρίται; which is more consonant to the Hebrew Name than the Latin, Hagareni. Their chief City was called Atra, and the Inhabitants Atræni, unless they mistook their Name, which perhaps was Agreni.

Ver. 20. *And they were helped against them,]* It is likely the Hagarites fought stoutly, but God assisted the Israelites; enduing them with extraordinary Courage, and daunted their Enemies. For it is not likely any other Help is here meant but that from God.

And the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them:] That is, those Allies before mentioned, who came to their Aid.

For they cried unto God in the battle, and he was intreated of them, because they put their trust in him.] I suppose their Enemies were too hard for them, in the first Onset; which made them pray to God most earnestly in the midst of the Fight: Representing to him the pious Confidence they placed in him and his almighty Power, and not in their Arms and warlike Skill: Which moved him to give them the Success they desired. Here the Targum, instead of these Words, they put their Trust in him, hath these, they put their Trust be memra, in his WORD.

Ver. 21. *And they took away their cattle;]* In the Hebrew, lead Captive; that is, drove as many of their Cattle as they pleased into their own Country. This Place is, among others, alledged by Grotius, as a Proof of the Lawful-

ness of taking the Spoil in a just War against an Enemy: As God allowed the Israelites to do, when a City fell in their Hands, which had refused their Offers of Peace, Deut. xx. 14. But this Instance is the more to be minded, because the War here spoken of was not by divine Precept as that against the seven Nations of Canaan: But from common Right, which Men had to defend themselves against injurious Persons, or to invade those who had invaded them, and would make them no Satisfaction. Such War was approved by God, it appears by this, that he aided them, when they called upon him for Help, as we read in the foregoing Verse. See Lib. 3. De Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. 6. Sect. 1.

Of their camels fifty thousand,] It is no Wonder there were so many, for the Arabians abounded in Camels, as Diodorus Siculus relates, Lib. 3. Cap. 12. which they used in War, as well as to carry Burdens in the Time of Peace. See Pliny, Lib. 8. cap. 18. and Vegetius, L. 3. For they being Creatures very patient of Thirst, were the fitter for any Service in that hot and dry Country. See Bochartus in his Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 2.

And of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand,] The prodigious Number of Sheep that those Countries produced, is at large shewed by the same Author, Lib. 2. Cap. 46. and their Breed of Asses in the same Book, Cap. 13.

And of men] In the Hebrew, Souls of Men; i. e. of Men, Women, and Children.

An hundred thousand.] Whom they did not kill (it appears by this Relation) but carried them out of their own Country, and sold them for Slaves (as the Manner was in those Days) or employed them as such in their own Business.

Ver. 22. *For there fell down many slain,]* Besides these taken Captive, a great Number were slain in the Fight; which could not be avoided.

Because the war was of God.] Perhaps they consulted him before they went upon this Expedition; and he encouraged them to undertake it, as he powerfully assisted them in it. Here again the Targum saith, the War was from the W O R D of Jehovah.

And they dwell in their stands] Possibly all those valiant Men who were engaged in this War, settled themselves in the Country which they had conquered.

Until the Captivity.] In the Days of Pekah, 2 Kings xv. 29. when they were rooted out, as the rest of the ten Tribes were in the Days of Hoshea.

Ver. 23. *And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwell in the land:]* In the same Country, on the other Side of Jordan, with the Reubenites and Gadites: Of whom he having spoken, gives a short Account of the Manassites.

They increased from Bashan unto Baal-hermon, and Senir, and unto Hermon.] They were first possessed of the Kingdom of Og in Bashan, Josh. xiii. 30. From whence they extended their Territories, when they were increased, unto the Northern Parts of the Country beyond Jordan.

Ver. 24. *And these were the heads of the house of their fathers, even Ephraim, and Issachar, and Eliab, and Azriel, and Jeremias, and Hodaviah, and Jabbiel, mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers.]* He reckons only the most remarkable Men of this Tribe: Who were not only of chief Authority in their several Families, but by their valiant Exploits had gotten great Renown.

Ver. 25. *And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.]* All Israel transgressed as well as they: But it seems they were the greatest Transgressors, who began, perhaps, the Apostasy from God, and were Ring-leaders to Idolatry. And therefore, as it here follows, they were the first that were carried away captive.

Ver. 26. *And the God of Israel]* The Targum saith, the Memra, or WORD of the God of Israel. From whence it appears, they thought the divine ΛΟΓΟΣ to be the God of Israel: For they are Words of the same Import.

Stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria,] When, perhaps, he intended to bend his Forces another Way, God inclined him to go against Israel: Whom he distressed so much, that they were forced to make him a great Present: Whereby they moved him not to stay there, but return to his own Country, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20. We do not read, that he carried any of the People captive; though perhaps he might, after some Spoil in the Skirts of the Country, as he went home.

And the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria] Who came in the next King's Reign but one, and carried those Tribes away captive, as we read in 2 Kings xv. 29.

And he carried them away (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh)] He carried these away entirely, together with some of the People of Galilee; particularly all Naphtali, as the fore-named Place tells us. And the Jews say, they carried away the golden Calf which was in Dan; as they gather from 2 Chron. xxviii. 21.

And brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara,] These are the very Places unto which Salmaneser afterward carried the Remainder of the Ten Tribes, 2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 11. where there is only this Difference, that there it is said into the cities of the Medes, but here unto Hara: Which is all one; for Media is the very same with Hara, and is by St Hierom (without an Aspiration) called Ara. And the Greeks commonly call it Aria, and the People of it Arii, as we read in Herodotus, Pausanius, and others. And Bochartus thinks, not without Reason, that the mountainous Part of the Country of Media towards the North, was properly called by this Name of Hara; from the Word Har, which signifies a Mountain. Here Strabo saith many Foreigners inhabited: For it is likely this hilly Country was most empty of People.

And the river of Gozan,] That is, to the Banks of the River on both Sides: For it is as much as τὴν περὶ ὧν, to the Region about this River, as our very learned Mr Nic. Fuller observes, in his Miscellanea, Lib. 2. C. 5. where

he takes Gozan to be the ancient Name for that River, which the Persians afterward called Cyrus: Near to which stood the City Gauzania in Ptolemy; which retained that Name from the River Gozan.

Unto this day.] Here they settled, as the same learned Man observes; and did not range as far as Tartary, as some have thought. For how should they, being miserable Captives, who had no Power to go back, or to go forward? Especially through strange Countries, without any Arms, or other Accommodations.

CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. **T**HE sons of Levi; Gershon; Kohath, and Merari.] The first of these is called Gersham, ver. 16. See Gen. xvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Kohath;]* He begins with the Genealogy of the second Son, because from him sprung the Family of the Priests.

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.] The second of these Sons is called Aminadab, ver. 22.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Amram; Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.]* See Exod. vi. 20.

The sons also of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.] The two first perished for their Sin, in offering with strange Fire, Lev. x. 1.

Ver. 4. *Eleazar begat Phinehas, and Phinehas begat Abishua,*

Ver. 5. *And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi,]* According to the Manner of the Greeks and Latins, who are wont to deprave Oriental Names, Josephus calls these three Abiezer, Boceias and Ozi, Lib. 5. Archæol. Cap. 41. And the Chronicon Alexandrinum, as Mr Selden observes, assigns the very Time when they exercised the High-priesthood; Abishua (whom he calls Abiud) in the Time of Ebud; Bukki in the Time of Shamgar; and Uzzi in the Time of Tola. In whose Days, the Jews think, the Priesthood was translated from the Family of Eleazar to that of Ithamar: For some great Sin which they had committed; as afterwards for the Sins of Eli his Sons, it was translated back again to Eleazar's Posterity. So they say in Juchasin, In the days of Sampson died Uzzi of the family of Eleazar, and the high-priesthood was translated to the family of Ithamar; the first of which was Eli. But as the Alexandrian Chronicle is of no great Authority, so there is no Mention, as Mr Selden observes, of the Names of these three Persons, as succeeding Phineas, either in the Scripture, or the Hebrew Chronicles, or in Eusebius. But the only High-priest between Eleazar and Eli is Phineas: Who the Jews think was alive in the War with the Benjamites, Judges xxi. 28. See Lib. 1. De Success. ad Pontif. Cap. 2. But this cannot be justified.

Ver. 6. *And Uzzi begat Zerabiah, and Zerabiah begat Meraioth.*

Ver. 7. *Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Abitub,]* See Ezra vii. 3. where in this Genealogy six Generations are omitted by him, from Meraioth to Azariah the son of Jehonah, which are here mentioned. This Kimchi thinks was done for Brevity's sake.

Ver. 8. *And Abitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Abimaaz.*] See 2 Sam. viii. 17. and xv.

²⁷ Ver. 9. *And Abimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan.*

Ver. 10. *And Johanan begat Azariah, he it is that executed the priests office, in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem.*] The Divine Writer sets a Mark of Honour upon *Azariah* (which he doth not on any of the foregoing) for maintaining his Office so resolutely, with the Danger of his Life, against the Usurpation of one of *Solomon's* Successors, who would have offered Incense in that very Temple which *Solomon* had built. Of which see 2 Chron. xxvi. 17, 18, &c. The mention of *Solomon's* Temple in this Place, plainly denotes, that this was written after the second Temple was built, or while it was in building.

But *Ludovicus Capellus* is of Opinion, that *Azariah* here spoken of is not he that resisted *Uzziah*. For such a noble Fact as that was, he thinks, would not have been touched in such general Words: But he takes him to have been the High-priest in the Days of *Solomon*; and was the first that ministred only in his Temple. For *Zadok* his Grandfather, and *Abimaaz* his Father ministred first in the Tabernacle. Therefore to make this agree with that *Azariah*, he thinks we ought to acknowledge a double *Metathesis* in these Verses 9, 10, 11, 12, which ought to be read thus: *Abimaaz begat Azariah, (he is the first that executed the priests office in the house which Solomon built in Jerusalem) Azariah begat Amariah, Amariah begat Johanan, Johanan begat Azariah, Azariah begat Abitub, Abitub begat Zadok.* If this be admitted, all the Difficulties that arise out of this Genealogy are quite removed. See his *Chronologia Sacra Notæ in Tab. XIV. p. 286.*

Ver. 11. *Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Abitub.*

Ver. 12. *And Abitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum.*] Who is called *Mesullam* in ch. ix. 11. These three are mentioned no where else, but in *Nehem. xi. 11.* tho' they discharged the High-Priest's Office in the Reigns of *Jotham, Abaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh*, as *Ludovicus Capellus* makes account in his *Chronol. Sacra, p. 287.*

Ver. 13. *And Shallum begat Hilkiab, and Hilkiab begat Azariah.*

Ver. 14. *And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak.*] When *Jerusalem* was taken by the king of *Babylon's* Army, *Seraiah* was carried by the Captain of the Guard to *Nebuchadnezzar* at *Riblah*: Where he commanded him to be put to death. So that in him ended the Succession of High-Priests under the first Temple: Which from *Zadok* unto him were twelve. The *Jews* in *Seder Olam Zula* make them to be eighteen; but they are not to be believed against the Scripture: There being also the very same Succession mentioned, *Ezra vii. 1, 2, &c.* which beginning from *Aaron*, the first four of these here mentioned, together with *Abitub* the Father of *Zadok* are omitted for Brevity's sake, as *Kimchi* thinks. See *Selden de Success. ad Pontiff. L. i. cap. 5.* But some think it sufficient to say, that it was not the

Intention of the Writer of this Book to mention all the High-Priests that were from *Zadok* to *Seraiah*: Because *Jehoiada* who was the High-Priest in the Time of *Athaliah* is not here named. He is called indeed every where *Jehoiada the Priest*: Yet he took upon him such Authority, as may well make us suppose him to have been High-Priest. It is observed by *Kimchi*, that the Line of the High-Priest is drawn from *Aaron* down to the Captivity, thro' the Family of *Eleazar* his eldest Son; none of *Itamar's* being mentioned: Because the perpetual Priesthood was promised only to *Phineas* the Son of *Eleazar*, Numb. xxv.

Ver. 15. *And Jehozadak went into captivity, when the Lord carried away Judah and Jerusalem, by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.*] In the Captivity he begat *Jeshua*, who came back in the Time of *Cyrus*, *Ezra iii. 2.*

Ver. 16. *The sons of Levi; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.*] He hath not yet done with the Account he intends to give of *Levi's* Posterity: And therefore repeats the Names of his Sons, from whom these *Levites* sprung, who were not Priests.

Ver. 17. *And these be the names of the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei.*] Who were not mentioned before.

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Kohath were, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.*] See ver. 2.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi.*] See *Exod. vi. 19.*

And these are the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.] That is, these were the Heads of the Families that sprung from them: As it is probable, they that follow in the next Catalogue were the Chief of their Families which continued unto the Days of *David*, who regulated their Attendance in their several Courses.

Ver. 20. *Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimnah his son.*] This last was his Grand-Son by his Son *Shimei*, as appears from ver. 42. But such are frequently called Sons.

Ver. 21. *Joab his son, Iddo his son, Zerab his son, Jeaterai his son.*

Ver. 22. *The sons of Kohath; Amminadab.*] Called *Izhar*, ver. 2.

Korah his son, Assir his son.

Ver. 23. *Elkanah his son, and Eliasaph his son, and Assir his son.*

Ver. 24. *Tabath his son, Uriel his son.*] Called also *Zephaniah*, ver. 36.

Uzziah his son.] Who went also by the Name of *Azariah*, as that Verse tells us.

And Shual his son.

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Elkanah.*] He was the Son of *Korah*, mentioned ver. 23. as appears from *Exod. vi. 24.*

Amasai, and Abimoth.

Ver. 26. *As for Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai his son.*] Or *Zuph*, as he is called ver. 35. This is another *Elkanah*; Son, it is likely, of him last mentioned.

And Nabath his son.

Ver. 27. *Eliab his son.*] Who is called *Eliel*, ver. 34.

Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Samuel.*] Who was the Son of *Elkanah*, as we read, 1 Sam. i. 1. which being a thing well known, this Writer (giving only a Breviate of these Histories) omits the mention of it. But it appears by this Account, that *Samuel* was only a *Levite*, not of the Race of the Priests (for he did not descend from *Aaron*, but from *Izhar* the Uncle of *Aaron*) much less the High-Priest, as some great Men have fancied. See *Selden de Success. ad Pontif. L. 1. cap. 14.*

The first-born Vashni, and Abiah.] The first of these is called *Joel*, 1 Sam. viii. 2. and here below, ver. 33.

Ver. 29. *The sons of Merari; Mabli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son.*

Ver. 30. *Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiab his son.*

Ver. 31. *And these are they.*] Having thus far deduced the Genealogy of the *Levites*, he proceeds now to give an Account how *David* ordered their Attendance upon the Service of God at the Tabernacle: And sets down the Names of the Chief of them, which here follows.

Whom David set over the service of the song.] Appointed to minister unto God by singing of Songs in his House.

After that the ark had rest.] After *David* had brought it from the House of *Obed Edom*, and settled it at *Jerusalem*, 2 Sam. viii. 17.

Ver. 32. *And they ministred before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of glory.*] Which *David* had prepared for the Ark, when it came to *Jerusalem*, 2 Sam. viii. 17.

With singing.] The Psalms which *David* and other Prophets composed.

Until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem.] Before the Temple was built by *Solomon*, they performed this Service: Which did not cease after it was built, but continued in great Order, as it here follows.

And then they waited in their office, according to their order.] Which *David* himself had constituted a little before his Death: As we read in the latter End of this Book.

Ver. 33. *And these are they that waited with their children: Of the sons of the Kohathites; Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel.*] That is, of *Samuel* the great Prophet: Whose Name, it appears by this, was differently pronounced in different Times and Places. This Place also still shews more clearly, that *Samuel* was only a *Levite* of the Family of the *Kohathites*, not a Priest of the Family of *Aaron*, which is suggested by the Psalmist, *Psal. xcix. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name.* Therefore, at *Eftius* observes, when *Samuel* is said to have offered Sacrifice, (as he did often in *Galgal* and other Places) it must be understood that he did it by the Ministry of the Priests, not by himself. And thus *David* and *Solomon* sacrificed, but not by their own Hands, but by those to whose Office it properly belonged.

This *Heman* was so eminent for his Skill in singing, that he is thought to have been a Composer of Hymns: Which I have considered in my Notes upon 1 Kings iv.

Ver. 34. *The son of Elkanah, the son of Je-*

roham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toak.] Called *Nabath*, ver. 26.

Ver. 35. *The son of Zuph.*] Called *Zuphai*, ver. 26.

The son of Elkanah, the son of Mabath, the son of Amisai.

Ver. 36. *The son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,*

Ver. 37. *The son of Tabath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah,*

Ver. 38. *The son of Izhar, the son of Kobath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.*] Thus in honour of *Samuel*, the Pedigree of *Heman*, who was his Grand-Son, is derived from *Israel* the Father of them all.

Ver. 39. *And his brother Asaph (who stood on his right hand) even Asaph the son of Berechiah, the son of Shimea.*] This depends upon ver. 33. where it is said, *these are they that waited with their Children, &c. viz. Heman and Asaph*: Who is called *Heman's* Brother, according to the Hebrew Phrase; in which all near Kindred are called *Brothers*. And these two were of the same Tribe, and Family; and also of the same Employment, upon which Account, if there were no other, he might be called the Brother of *Heman*.

Ver. 40. *The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Melchiah,*

Ver. 41. *The son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiab.*

Ver. 42. *The son of Ethan, the son of Zimamah, the son of Shimei,*

Ver. 43. *The son of Jathath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi.*] There was no need to add, *the son of Israel*: For it is apparent they sprung from the same Stock, by two Brethren the Sons of *Levi*.

Ver. 44. *Their brethren the sons of Merari, stood on the left hand.*] In like Manner, the Children of the next Son of *Levi* are here mentioned; who had the lowest Place assigned, because they were of the youngest Family. So there were three principal Singers, who were Masters and Governors of the whole Choir, *Heman* descended from *Kobath* was the Prime, who, together with his Sons stood in the middle: And then *Asaph*, descended from *Gershon* with his Sons stood on his right Hand: And *Ethan* from *Merari* on the left. Of these three Families there were three principal Persons, who bare Rule over the rest of the Singers here mentioned, and kept good Order among them. And indeed there was an admirable Order observed, in the whole Ministry at the Tabernacle: Three great Men, and their Sons were Singers and Musicians; the rest of the *Levites* prepared and made ready the Sacrifices; the Priests offered them; and the High Priest officiated in the most Holy Place, as it here follows.

Ethan the son of Kisbi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch:] He who is here called *Ethan*, is called *Jeduthun*, ch. ix. 16. and in many other Places.

Ver. 45. *The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziab, the son of Hilkiab.*

Ver. 46. *The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer,*

Ver. 47. *The son of Mabli, the son of Musbi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.] It is observable, that in all the Genealogies of the Levites, there is not a Word said of the Sons of Moses and their Posterity: He having no Ambition to prefer them unto any Office, either in Church or State.*

Ver. 48. *Their brethren also the Levites,]* The rest of that Tribe, who were not fit to be Singers.

Were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle, of the house of God.] They performed all the laborious Work that was to be done in the Tabernacle; being Porters, Keepers of the Vessels of the Sanctuary, as well as taking Care to prepare the Sacrifices, and such like Things. Of which an Account is given below in ch. xxiii. and these following.

Ver. 49. *But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.] The noblest Part of the Ministry was reserved for Aaron and his Posterity: Which is mentioned at large in the Book of Leviticus. Which shews that Aaron alone, and his Successors in the High Priesthood, ministered in the place most holy, and made the Atonement: But his Sons the Priests, offered on the Altars of Burnt-offering, and of Incense.*

Ver. 50. *And these are the sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phineas his son, Abisbua his son,*

Ver. 51. *Bukki his son, Uzzi his son. Zerahiah his son,*

Ver. 52. *Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Abitub his son,*

Ver. 53. *Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.] Having mentioned the High-Priest's Office, he sets down the Succession of it from Aaron to the Time of David: Which he had done before more largely to the Time of the Captivity, ver. 3; 4, &c. There was no Age like to this of David's, as Victorinus Strigelius observes, which produced so many great Men, that he calls it the Prophetical Age. Wherein God raised up Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan: Who made the Word of God dwell plentifully in the Church of Israel in all Wisdom.*

Ver. 54. *Now these are their dwelling-places throughout their castles, in the coasts of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites.] Now follows an Account of the Place where they inhabited: And first of the Habitation of the Sons of Aaron, who were the noblest of the Kohathites.*

For theirs was the Lot.] That is, the first Lot fell to them. See Josh. xxi. 4.

Ver. 55. *And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it. Josh. xxi. 10, 11.*

Ver. 56. *But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. Josh. xxi. 12.*

Ver. 57. *And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, namely, Hebron the city of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs.] Besides the*

forenamed City of Hebron (which is mentioned again, because the most eminent) they gave them these following, which were in the same Tribe of Judah.

Ver. 58. *And Hilen with her suburbs.] Called Holon in the Book of Joshua; ch. xxi. 15.*

And Debir with her suburbs.] Mentioned in the same Place.

Ver. 59. *And Ashan with her suburbs.] Called Ain, Josh. xxi. 16.*

And Beth-shemesh with her suburbs.] Mentioned in the same Place.

Ver. 60. *And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and Alemeth with her suburbs.] Called Almon, Josh. xxi. 18.*

And Anothoth with her suburbs. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen cities.] Whereof there are only eleven here mentioned: But there are two more added in the Book of Joshua, viz. Jattah and Gibeon, which make thirteen, ch. xxi. 16, 17. Perhaps they were not yet rebuilt, when this Book was written.

Ver. 61. *And unto the sons of Kohath, which were left of the same family of that tribe.] Who were not of the Sons of Aaron, but descended from Kohath.*

Were cities given out of the half tribe, namely out of the half tribe of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.] Some of these Cities were taken out of the Tribe of Manasseh, and some out of others; as appears from Josh. xxi. But in all they made ten, v. 26.

Ver. 62. *And to the sons of Gershom throughout their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh, in Basban, thirteen cities.] Their Cities were assigned them in these several Tribes, because they were too many to be contained in one.*

Ver. 63. *Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.*

Ver. 64. *And the children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities, with their suburbs.] To the Tribe of Levi, consisting of Priests, and simple Levites, these Cities were given, which are here mentioned in this Chapter.*

Ver. 65. *And he gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin.] These three Tribes were very near one to another; and in several Places Simeon mixed together with the other two.*

These cities which are called by their names.] Which are recited in the foregoing Verses (v. 57, &c.) and given to the Sons of Aaron.

Ver. 66. *And the residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts, out of the tribe of Ephraim.] By Coasts here is meant Portions: Which were assigned them, tho' they were not Priests, for their Support in a lower Ministry. These Things seem to be mentioned so often, and with such Exactness, that it might appear what Care was taken by God for the Maintenance of his Ministers of all Sorts; and for the Instruction of his People, among whom he dispersed the Levites, who were peculiarly devoted to his Service.*

Ver. 67. *And they gave unto them of the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim, with her suburbs : they gave also Gezer with her suburbs.]* These were Places of great Eminence, unto which there was great Resort : Which gave them the greater Opportunity of doing good. They are both expressly mentioned, *Josh. xxi. 21.*

Ver. 68. *And Jokeam with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs,*

Ver. 69. *And Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gathrimmon with her suburbs.*

Ver. 70. *And out of the half tribe of Manasseh ; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kobath.]* The City here called *Bileam* is called *Ibleam* in the Book of *Joshua* ; Length of Time making greater Alterations in the Names both of Persons and Places, than this is, as appears by several other Places here mentioned. For as *Kimchi* here well notes (which frivolous Cavillers should observe) the Divine Writers did not affect Accuracy in such Matters as these ; but took Names as they found them.

Ver. 71. *Unto the sons of Gershom were given out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Basban with her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs.]* From Golan came the Gaulonites.

Ver. 72. *And out of the tribe of Issachar ; Kedish with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs,*

Ver. 73. *And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs :*

Ver. 74. *And out of the tribe of Asher ; Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,*

Ver. 75. *And Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs.*

Ver. 76. *And out of the tribe of Naphtali ; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.]* That Place which here is called *Hamon*, is in *Josh. xxi. 32.* called *Hamoth* : From whence some argue, that one of these Places is corrupted ; and they fancy this, because the LXX here hath *χαμὸθ*. As tho' the Name of some Place and Person (as I said before) may not be differently pronounced in different Times and Countries. As *Achan* and *Acbar*, mentioned above.

Ver. 77. *Unto the rest of the children of Merari were given out of the tribe of Zebulon, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs.*

Ver. 78. *And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east-side of Jordan were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezzer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jabzab with her suburbs.*

Ver. 79. *Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs.*

Ver. 80. *And out of the tribe of Gad ; Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs,*

Ver. 81. *And Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.]* The first of these, *Heshbon*, was reckoned to be in the Tribe of Reuben as well as in Gad. Of which see *Josh. xiii. 17.*

CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *NOW the sons of Issachar were Tola, and Puab, Jashub, and Shimron, four.]* There is some little Difference in the Names of two of these, as they are mentioned *Gen. xlvii.* And *Jashub* seems to have been called *Job*, for brevity sake : Just as *Aram* is called *Ram*, and among us *Alexander* is called *Saunders*. See *Buxtorf's Anticritica*, Part ii. Cap. 8. where *Rasi* gives another Account of it, but not so likely.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Tola ; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their fathers house, to wit, of Tola : they were valiant men of might in their generations ; whose number was in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred.]* When David numbered the People (2 Sam. xxiv.) there were found thus many descended from the first-born of *Issachar* ; which was a very great Increase.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Uzzi ; Izrahiah.]* He names but one Son : Therefore, all his Posterity is comprehended in the Name of Sons.

And the sons of Izrahiah ; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five : all of them chief men.] Reckoning their Father for one, they were five in all : And Persons of great Authority.

Ver. 4. *And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were bands of souldiers for war, six and thirty thousand men.]* As they were numerous, so they were of a warlike Spirit ; which made them very considerable.

For they had many wives and sons.] They were very fruitful, and propagated the more, because they had many Wives, who bare them many Sons : And those Sons, it is likely, took many Wives also, for the greater Increase of their Family. For this was the Cause of Polygamy among them, the Desire of a numerous Offspring (whereby God's Promise to *Abraham*, of making them as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude, might be fulfilled) and of an holy Race of People to propagate Piety, when the Nations of the World were generally corrupted. See *Chap. viii. 40.*

Ver. 5. *And their brethren.]* That is, their Kindred.

Among all the families of Issachar, were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies, fourscore and seven thousand.] There was no such great Increase of the rest of the Families of *Issachar*, since in all they amounted but to this Number : And from two of his Sons sprung above fifty eight thousand.

Ver. 6. *The sons of Benjamin ; Bele, and Becher, and Jediael, three.]* He mentions no more in this Place ; but in the next Chapter, ver. 1, 2. he mentions five : They were ten in all, as we read in *Gen. xlvii. 21.* But either half of them died without Issue, or their Families were extinct, or their Genealogies lost.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Bela ; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five ; Heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, and were reckoned by their genealogies, twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.]* There are

are others mentioned as his Sons, *ch. viii. 8.* therefore it is likely these were his Grand-sons: Who being more eminent than their Fathers, were mentioned as the chief of their several Families, from whence they sprung.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elieonai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these are the sons of Becher.*

Ver. 9. *And the number of them after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, was twenty thousand and two hundred.]* They were not so many as those descended from the eldest Son: And the youngest Son had still fewer.

Ver. 10. *The sons also of Jediel; Bilhan.]* He mentions but one; who includes all descended from him, as it here follows.

And the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ebud, and Chanaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Abishakar.

Ver. 11. *All these the sons of Jediel, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, were seventeen thousand and two hundred souldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.*

Ver. 12. *Shuphim also, and Huphim, the children of Iri.]* Or, of Iri, as he is called, *v. 7.* the youngest Son of Bela. Whose Sons are called *Huphim* and *Muphim*, *Gen. xli. 21.* In which Book there are other proper Names of Men, in the plural Number, *Gen. x. 13, 14. xxv. 3.*

And Husim, the sons of Aber.] If he still speak of the Sons of Benjamin, this Person was called *Abiram*, *Numb. xxvi. 39.* But there being no mention of the Tribe of Dan in this Genealogy, unless it be here, many take *Aber* not to be a proper Name, but a common Word, signifying *other*: And so translate the Words thus, *another Son*: That is, the Son of another Tribe or Family, *viz. of Dan.* For *Husim* was his only Son, *Gen. xli. 23.* where the Word *Sons*, tho' he speak of one Man only, is used as it is in this Place.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Naphtali; Jabziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilbab.]* The Sons of *Bilbab* were *Naphtali*, and *Dan*. Therefore these were her Grand-sons by the first of them.

Ver. 14. *The sons of Manasseh; Asriel.]* His great Grand-son: For both he, and *Zelophebad* were the Sons of *Gilead*, the Son of *Machir*, the Son of *Manasseh*. See *Num. xxvi. 29, &c. xxvii. 1.*

Whom she bare.] That is, whom his Wife bare: For his Concubine is here opposed to her, in the next Words.

(But his concubine, the Aramitefs, bare Machir the father of Gilead.) He took a Syrian Woman to Wife; from whom his chief Posterity descended.

Ver. 15. *And Machir took to wife the sister of Huphim and Muphim, whose sisters name was Maachab.)* He married into the Tribe of Benjamin, whose Sons these were.

And the name of the second son was Zelophebad.] This relates to the Beginning of *ver. 14.* where his first Son *Asriel* is mentioned.

And Zelophebad had daughters.] No Sons, but only Daughters; as we read in the Book of *Numbers, ch. xxvii.*

Ver. 16. *And Maachab the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother was Shereph; and his sons were Ulam, and Rakem.*

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.*

Ver. 18. *And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishad, and Abiezer, and Mahalab.]* That is, the Sister of *Gilead*, as *Kimchi* understands it, (tho' some take her to have been the Sister of *Bedan*) who was an illustrious Woman, and therefore here mentioned, and, as the *Targum* imagine, was a Queen; That is, Governess of a certain Tract of Land, in the Country of *Gilead*. For he takes *Hamoleketh* not for a proper Name, but for an Appellative: Of which there is no mention neither in the Law, nor in the Prophets, as *Kimchi* confesses; but they have this by Tradition. Which, tho' it be very groundless, the *Vulgar Latin* follows it, and translates this Word *Regina*. Which *Estius* ingenuously acknowledges to be a Mistake.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Shemida were, Abiah, and Shechem, and Likki, and Aniam.]* There is no mention of *Shemida* before. But he is supposed to be another Son of *Gilead's* Sister before-named.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tabath his son, and Eladab his son, and Tabath his son.]* Some will have all these to be the Sons of *Ephraim*: But the most natural Sense seems to be, that *Bered* was the Son of *Shuthelah*, and *Tabath* the Son of *Bered*, &c. and so on to the following Descendants of *Ephraim*, whose Genealogy is now related.

Ver. 21. *And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.]* This Piece of History is nowhere else recorded: Which in all likelihood fell out before the Children of *Israel* came out of the Land of *Egypt*. For *Ephraim*, it appears by the next Verse, was alive when these Children of his were slain. Who, as the *Targum* thinks, mistook in their Computation of the End of the Years, wherein they were to be Slaves in *Egypt*; and imagining them to be expired, made an Inroad into the Land of *Canaan* to take Possession of it, before the Time they were to enjoy it. But others think it proceeded from their Desire of Prey and Spoil, which they thought they might lawfully get from those whose Country they were to possess: And they presumed the more to make this Attempt, because they were valiant Men, and proud, perhaps of the great Power and Authority, which their Uncle *Joseph* had in *Egypt*. Tho' others think it more probable, that the *Philistines* having infested them in the Land of *Goshen*, these Sons of *Zabad*, broke into their Country, to make Reprisals upon their Cattle. Dr *Lightfoot* (in the Conclusion of his *Annotations on Genesis*) quite contrary, thinks that the Men of *Gath* went to plunder in *Egypt*; and there slew these *Ephraimites*, who only stood up in Defence of their Cattle. And those Words, *that were born in the land*, he thinks, signify these

these Men of Gath were born in Egypt, tho' they now dwelt in Gath. So the Men of Gath were the Plunderers, and not the Ephraimites. But they who take the Ephraimites to have been the Invaders, think those Words are added, to shew that the Philistines were the more incensed against them; because they seemed to come to dispossess them of their Land.

Ver. 22. *And Ephraim their father.*] They were his Grand-children.

Mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.] That is, his Kindred (as the Word Brethren often signifies) they that were of his Family, came to condole with him. This shews, Ephraim lived to be a very old Man, if this happened near to the Time of their going out of Egypt.

Ver. 23. *And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Beriab, because it went evil with his house.*] For so the Word Beriab imports: His Family was in an ill Condition.

Ver. 24. *And his daughter was Sherab, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherab.*] She was, it seems, a very great Woman: Who restored both these Cities of Beth-horon, which were destroyed by the Israelites, when they conquered the Land of Canaan, and rebuilt them in the same Place; adding another City, which carried her own Name in it.

Ver. 25. *And Rephab was his son.*] i. e. The Son of Beriab.

Also Resheph, and Telab his son, and Taban his son.] Beriab also had another Son, whose Name was Resheph, whose Son was Tela, &c.

Ver. 26. *Laadan his son, Ammibud his son, Elisbama his son.*] Who was the chief Commander in the Tribe of Ephraim, when they were in the Wilderness, Numb. i. 10.

Ver. 27. *Non his son, Jehoshuab his son.*] For whose sake his Pedigree seems to be thus largely deduced.

Ver. 28. *And their Possessions and Habitations were Bethel, and the towns thereof.*] See Josh. xvi. 1, &c.

And eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer with the towns thereof, Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof.] Or rather Ad-azea, a Place so called: For their Border did not extend so far as Gaza in the Land of the Philistines.

Ver. 29. *And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel.*] That is, the Children of Manasseh. See Josh. xvi. 11.

Ver. 30. *The sons of Asher; Innab, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriab, and Serab their sister.*] See the same Account of them in Gen. xlv. 17.

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Beriab; Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father of Birzavith.*] The two first of these were born before they went into Egypt, as appears from Gen. xlv. 11.

Ver. 32. *And Heber begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotbam, and Shuab their sister.*

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimbal, and Ashvatb: these are the children of Japhlet.*

Ver. 34. *And the sons of Shamer; Abi, and Robgab, Jekubbab, and Aram.*] The Father of these was the second Brother of Japhlet, called Shomer, ver. 32.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of his brother.*] That is, of Hotbam, who was next Brother of Shamer.

Helem, Zophab, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

Ver. 36. *The sons of Zophab; Suab, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,*

Ver. 37. *Bezer, and Hod, and Shammah, and Shilshab, and Itbran, and Beera.*

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.*] This Jether is the same that is called in the Verse foregoing Itbran; the youngest Son, but one, of Zophab: The rest had no Sons; or their Genealogy was lost.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Ulla; Arab, and Haniel, and Rezia.*] We do not read whose Son Ulla was; but 'tis probable of Jether: Whereof there are many Examples in the foregoing Chapters.

Ver. 40. *All these were the children of Asher, heads of their fathers house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes.*] Of these only he gives an Account, and takes no Notice of inferior Families: Tho' they are included, I suppose, in the following Number.

And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle, was twenty and six thousand men.] Tho' they lived in a rich and delicious Country, abounding with Wine and Oil, and other good Things, in the best Part of Galilee; yet they did not give themselves up to Sloth and Laziness; but were a warlike and valiant People.

CHAP. VIII.

Verse 1. **N**OW Benjamin begat Bela his first-born.] He goes over the Genealogy of this Tribe again (which he had begun before in the foregoing Chapter, v. 6.) and gives a larger Account of it; because it was entirely joined to the Tribe of Judah: And likewise, that he might make way for the following History, and touch upon the Generations of Saul; and shew, how this Tribe was increased again, after that great Calamity which befel them in the Time of the Judges.

Ashbel the second Son, and Abarak the third.] His first-born Bela is expressly so called by Moses, Gen. xlv. 21. But all the rest are called by very different Names. Therefore, either these were his Grand-children (who are frequently called Sons) or they had two Names, which I shewed before was not unusual. See Chap. iii. 1.

Ver. 2. *Nobah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.*

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Bela were, Addar, and Gera, and Abibud,*

Ver. 4. *And Abishua, and Naaman, and Abhoab,*

Ver. 5. *And Gera.*] It is likely, this was the Son of the fore-named; and so Grand-son to Bela.

And Shephuphan, and Hiram.

Ver. 6. *And these are the sons of Ebud.*] Who is not named before; unless he be the third Son

Son of *Bela*, called *Abibud*, ver. 3. And some think the three Persons last named to have been his Sons.

These are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba.] Where their first Settlement was.

And they removed them to Manabath.] That is, *Gera* removed them; as it follows, ver. 7. to a Place mentioned before in the second Chapter of this Book, ver. 52, 54. *Geba* being too narrow for them, when they were multiplied: Or, this other Place being a more commodious Habitation.

Ver. 7. *And Naaman, and Abiah, and Gera: he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Abibud.*] After his Removal.

Ver. 8. *And Shabarim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim, and Baara were his wives.*] After the Removal before mentioned, this Person took two Wives of the Country of *Moab*: Whose Names are here set down. To shew (say some of the *Jews*) that tho' a *Moabite* was excluded from the Congregation of the LORD, yet a *Moabite's* was not; as appears by the Example of *Ruth*.

Ver. 9. *And he begat of Hodesh his wife.*] The *Jews* think she is the same with *Baara*: Who was called *Hodesh*, that is *new*; because he renewed the Example of marrying a *Moabitish* Woman: Which was first practis'd in *Ruth*. But this is an odd Fancy of theirs, who misplace the Time of *Ruth*.

Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham.

Ver. 10. *And Feuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These were his sons, heads of the fathers.*] Chief Men in their Families.

Ver. 11. *And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal.*] On this Verse the *Jews* ground what they say of *Hodesh*, that she was the same with *Baara*, mentioned ver. 8. with *Hushim* as his other Wife.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof.*] These two, *Ono*, and *Lod*, are joined together in other Places, being neighbouring Cities. See *Ezra* ii. 33. *Nebem*. vi. 37. xi. 33. They were but three Miles distant one from the other, as Dr *Lightfoot* computes in his *Chorographical Decats* before St *Mark*, chap. ix. sect. ult. where he shews the *Talmudists* say, that *Ono* was a walled City from the Days of *Joshua*; but in the War against *Gibeon* it was burnt with Fire, as other Cities were: And rebuilt by this *Elpaal*: Who also re-edified *Lod*, which is the same with *Lydda* in the *New Testament*, as the same Dr *Lightfoot* observes in his *Chorographical Century* before St *Matthew*. Where he observes the Author of the Maps of the Land of *Canaan*, hath placed *Lydda* not far from *Jordan*, and *Lod* near the *Mediterranean*: Whereas they are one and the same Place, as he shews at large. And in the other Place mentioned before, he shews it was also called *Laodicea*: For sometimes they speak of the *Martyrs in Lod*, and in other Places call them the *Martyrs in Laodicea*.

Ver. 13. *Beriab also, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon.*] That is, of the Fields that lay about *Ai-*

jalon: For the Town it self belonged to the Tribe of *Dan*, *Josh*. xix. 42.

Who drove away the inhabitants of Gath.] In revenge (as *Pelicanus* thinks) of the Slaughter they made long ago, of their Brethren the *Ephraimites*, ch. vii. 21. Or, finding the Men of *Gath* had possessed themselves of this Place, they drove them out after their Return from the Captivity of *Babylon*. But we read of no War after their Return, till the Time of the *Macca-bees*: And therefore this belongs (as a most judicious Friend of mine, Dr *Alix*, observes) to what was done in ancienter Times, viz. after the Division of the Country by *Joshua*.

Ver. 14. *And Abio, Shashak, and Jeremoth,*

Ver. 15. *And Zebadiab, and Arad, and Adar.*

Ver. 16. *And Michael, and Ispah, and Joba, the sons of Beriab.*] Mentioned before, ver. 13.

Ver. 17. *And Zebadiab, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber.*

Ver. 18. *Ishmerai also, and Jexliab, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal.*] Of whom we had an Account before, ver. 11, 12.

Ver. 19. *And Jakim, and Zickri, and Zabdi,*

Ver. 20. *And Elienai, and Zilkhai, and Eliel,*

Ver. 21. *And Adaiab, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of Shimbi.*] It is likely that this *Shimbi* is the same with him who is called *SHEMA*, ver. 13.

Ver. 22. *And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel,*

Ver. 23. *And Abdon, and Zickri, and Hanan,*

Ver. 24. *And Hananiab, and Elam, and Anothbijab.*

Ver. 25. *And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the Sons of Shashak.*] This *Shashak* was an eminent Person, mentioned ver. 14.

Ver. 26. *And Shamsherai, and Shebariah, and Athaliah.*] Here is another Instance of the same Name, being common to Men and Women.

Ver. 27. *And Jarefiab, and Eliab, and Zickri, the sons of Jerobam.*] He is the same with *Jeremoth*, mentioned ver. 14. next to *Shashak*.

Ver. 28. *These were heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jerusalem.*] It is probable that all these mentioned from ver. 14. dwelt at *Jerusalem*, (one Part of which belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*) as they that are fore-named did at *Aijalon*.

Ver. 29. *And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon (whose wives name was Maachab.)* Perhaps *Gibeon* built this City, and gave his Name to it, as *Kimchi* conjectures. But his proper Name was *Jebiel* (as we read ch. ix. 35. where this Genealogy is repeated) and he is called the *Father of Gibeon*, because he was the chief Ruler or Governor of the *Benjamites*, who inhabited that Place.

Ver. 30. *And his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab.*] Between *Baal* and *Nadab*, there is mention of another Son called *Ner*, ch. ix. 36.

Ver. 31. *And Gedor, and Abio, and Zacher.*] Who is called *Zachariah* in ch. ix. 37. where another Son is added, called *Mikloth*, whose Posterity here follows.

Ver. 32. *And Mikloth begat Shimeah.*] Who is called *Shimeam*, *ch. ix. 38.*

And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over-against them.] These Families likewise were settled at *Jerusalem*, as well as the fore-named: And dwelt in a Part of the City directly over-against the other.

Ver. 33. *And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul.*] I observed before, *ver. 30.* that *Ner* was one of the Sons of *Gibeon* (or *Jebiel*) who did not beget (in the common Signification of the Word) *Kish*: But educated him and bred him up. For *Kish* was the Son of *Abiel*: But different from him mentioned *1 Sam. xiv. 51.* who was his Brother. The *Targum* here saith, that *Ner* and *Abiel* were the same Men; who had two Names: *Abiel* was his proper Name, but he was called *Ner* (which signifies a *Light*) because he was illustrious upon some Accounts which the *Jews* mentioned. See upon *1 Sam. ix. 1.* where there is a large Account of the Ancestors of *Abiel*; none of which are here mentioned. Upon which *Conradus Pelicanus* makes this Reflection. “ That hence we may learn, “ it is an unnecessary Labour scrupulously to “ enquire after these things, from which we “ can reap no Fruit, and of which we may be “ ignorant without danger. Especially in the “ Matter of these Genealogies; the Reason “ of which is long ago expired; together with “ the Tribes to which they belong. As for “ the Certainty of our Belief, which depends “ upon the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, “ that stands firm and constant, tho’ some “ Things by the Length of Time be so obscure, that they are not now exactly understood; especially in the Difference we find “ in the proper Names of Persons and Places, “ which without any prejudice to the Faith “ may be neglected.” Thus he.

And Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-Baal.] Who is called also *Ishbosheth*. See *2 Sam. ii. 8.*

Ver. 34. *And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micha.*] This Son of *Jonathan* is called commonly *Mephibosheth*. See in the fore-named Place.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of Micah were, Piton, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz.*] The third of these is called *Tabrea*, *ch. ix. 41.*

Ver. 36. *And Ahaz begat Jehoadab, and Jehoadab begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza.*

Ver. 37. *And Moza begat Binda: Rapha was his son, Eleasab his son, Azel his son:*

Ver. 38. *And Azel had six sons, whose names were these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiab, and Haman. All these were the sons of Azel.*

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Eshek his brother, were Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.*] We read nothing of *Eshek* before, unless he be the same with *Eleasab*, *v. 37.*

Thus the Family of *Saul*, tho’ he was rejected by God from being King of *Israel*, was blessed with a numerous Progeny; which sprung from his great Grand-Child *Micah*: Whose Posterity is here largely recorded, in honour of *Jonathan*.

Ver. 40. *And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers.*] In the *Hebrew* the

Word for *Archers* is, those that tread the Bow because their Steel Bows (which were much in use among them) were so strong, that they could not bend them with their Arms; but sat down, and pressing them with their Feet, pulled the Arrow with both Hands, that it might fly with greater Force.

And had many sons, and sons sons an hundred and fifty. All these are of the sons of Benjamin.] Who it appears by *Judges xx.* were a very valiant Tribe: And this Family, in particular, were noted to be very great, both in Number and Valour.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies.*] As much as to say, thus I have summarily reckoned up the Genealogies of all the Tribes; as I found them in the publick Registers.

And behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel, and of Judah.] For, let it be noted, they were so careful to preserve their Genealogies, that they were kept in the publick Records, not only of the *Jews*, but of the *Israelites*: Whose Kings were not negligent in this Matter.

Who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.] These last mentioned, of the Tribe of *Judah*, were carried thither; as the *Israelites* had been before into remote Countries, upon the same Account of their Idolatry. In which Captivity there was, no doubt, a great Confusion made in their Families: But *Ezra*, by the help of the Prophets *Haggai*, and *Malachi* (as the *Jews* think) undertook to set them right, by giving an Account of what he found remaining in his Time. Tho’ there is a great Difference of Names in *Nehem. xi.* from those who are here mentioned: *Malachi* also and *Ezra* did not live in the same Time.

Ver. 2. *Now the first inhabitants that dwelt in their possessions in their cities were.*] He speaks of those that came back to their own Country with *Zerubbabel*.

The Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims.] The first Inhabitants that came and settled in their Country, out of which they had been carried Captive, he comprehends, under four Sorts of Persons, *Israelites*, *Priests*, *Levites*, and *Nethinims*. The first of these seems to comprehend not only all those of the ten Tribes, who were carried Captive with *Judah* and *Benjamin*, but those also who were carried into *Affyria* and *Media* by *Tiglath-Pileser* and *Salmanasser*. For the Edict of *Cyrus* extended to them, as well as to *Judah* and *Benjamin*; and as the Prophets had foretold, (see *Jer. v. 3, 4, 10,* and *ch. xxxi.*) some of them did return, tho’ too many (as the *Jews* also did) continued where they were settled in their Captivity. But that the Word *Israelites* is here a distinct Name from the *Jews*, is apparent from what follows, *ver. 3.* The last of these, *viz. the Nethinims*, are generally thought by the Jewish Interpreters to be the same with the *Gibeonites*, who performed the lower Offices in the Temple, being Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water. See *Josh. ix. 27.* But *Ezra* hath given us a better Account of them, *ch. viii. 20.* where he informs

us they were given by David to minister to the Levites, (which is the Original of their Name) as the Levites were given by God to help the Priests. And therefore in all Places they are mentioned with Holy Persons.

Ver. 3. *And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh.*] This shews that some of the ten Tribes returned with those of Judah and Benjamin. For the Proclamation of Cyrus excepted none, but gave all the People of that Nation liberty to return to their own Country. And Josephus says expressly, that the Edict of Cyrus was sent by Zerubbabel to those of Assyria and Media. Many indeed neglected that Favour (as I said before) and continued where they were settled; but those that did return were united to the Jews without Distinction. Infomuch, that at Jerusalem, which belonged to the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin, some of Ephraim and Manasseh were permitted to make their abode. For several of those Tribes being left in the Land of Samaria, when the ten Tribes were carried away, joined with Judah (2 Chron. xxxi. 1. xxxii. 1. xxxiv. 9, &c.) and were carried with them to Babylon, and returned with them.

Ver. 4. *Uthai the son of Ammibud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.*] Now he sets down their Names; and first those of the Tribe of Judah in this and the two following Verses. But their Names are so different from those in Nehem. xi. that it is an Argument they speak of quite different Persons, who lived in different Times.

Ver. 5. *And of the Shilonites.*] Who are called Shelomites in Numb. xxvi. 20.

Asaiab the first-born, and his sons.] The eldest of that Family, and those descended from him.

Ver. 6. *And of the sons of Zerab; Jeuel, and his brethren.*] By Brethren are meant near Relations, as ver. 13, 21.

Six hundred and ninety.] This was the whole Number of the Children of Judah, who dwelt in Jerusalem, after they came out of their Captivity.

Ver. 7. *And of the sons of Benjamin, Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.*] This Meshullam is said to be descended from quite different Ancestors, than is mentioned Nehem. xi. 7. And therefore this is a quite different Person from the other, tho' of the same Name. Tho' some think that one of these Authors gives an Account of his remote Ancestors, and the other of his more immediate: Which is not probable.

Ver. 8. *And Ibneiah the son of Jeroboam, and Elab the son of Uzzi, the son of Mickri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah.*

Ver. 9. *And their brethren according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six.*] By Brethren, as I said before, are meant their near Kindred.

All these Men.] That is, the seven mentioned above, ver. 4, 8.

Were chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.] They are called chief Fathers, the-

cause they were principal Governors in their Families. Nehemiah mentions no more than nine hundred twenty and eight, who came with these; therefore gives an Account of different Persons; or some before his Time were dead, or removed to some other Place. The first is most likely.

Ver. 10. *And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jeboiarib, and Jachin.*] These are the second Sort of Inhabitants that first settled in their Possessions after the Captivity, mentioned ver. 2.

Ver. 11. *And Azariah the son of Hilkiab.*] Not he in the Days of Josiah, (2 Kings xxii. 8.) but another of the same Name; whose Son Seraiah lived in the Time of Nehemiah, xi. 11.

The son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Maraioth, the son of Abitub, the ruler of the house of God.] This last Person is thought by Pellicanus to have been the High-Priest: But both Ezra, and Haggai tell us Jeshua (or Joshua) was High-Priest, Ezra iii. 2. Haggai i. 1. This therefore was not the Ruler, but a Ruler in God's House (as the Words should be translated) not the principal Ruler, but one in great Authority under him: Perhaps he that was called the Sagan (who was Vicar to the High-Priest; and perform'd his Office when he was sick, or otherwise hindered) or he was the Head of one of the Courses of the Priests, that attended in their Turns, at the House of God. Here it is to be noted, that by the House of God in this Place, we are taught by ver. 23. to understand the House of the Tabernacle. For as before the first Temple was built there was a Tabernacle for Divine Service; so after the second was founded, they erected a Tabernacle, till this Temple could be finished: Without which they could not have performed the several Parts of the Worship of God, which were annexed to the several Parts of the Holy Places, according to the Law.

Ver. 12. *And Adaiab the son of Jeroham, the son of Pasbur, the son of Malchijah, and Masai the son of Adiel, the son of Jazerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer.*] There were three between that Jeroham and Pasbur mentioned in Nehemiah: And therefore he was either his great Grand-Son, or they were different Persons, tho' of the same Name.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.*] In the Hebrew they are called mighty men of valour. For the Service of the House of God required not only great Strength of Body, but great Courage and Resolution of Mind; especially at that Time when they were newly come out of Captivity. There was a famous Instance of this Courage before the Captivity, in Azariah: Who resisted the King himself, when he would have profaned the Holy Place, 2 Chron. xxvi. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 14. *And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hasub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hasabiah, of the sons of Merari.*] These are the third Sort of Persons, mentioned ver. 2.

Ver. 15. *And Bakkakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Richri, the son of Asaph.*] This last was descended,

it is likely, from that *Asaph* who lived in *David's* Time, 2 Chron. xx. 14.

Ver. 16. *And Obadiab the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiab the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.]* He speaks of *Elkanah*, not of *Berechiab*: For he dwelt at *Jerusalem*. But there was not room for them all there; therefore *Elkanah*, and those that belonged to him, dwelt in these Villages, till their own Cities were rebuilt. They were in the Tribe of *Judah*, (ch. ii. 54.) and waited at *Jerusalem* in their Courses, tho' they did not dwell there.

Ver. 17. *And the porters]* Or, rather the *Guards*, as the *Hebrew* Word signifies, and not *Porters*.

Were Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief.] The next Verse tells us, at what Places these *Guards* exercised their Office.

Ver. 18. *(Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward.)]* That is, where the King's Gate formerly was. Which shews that the *Tabernacle* they had erected was not on *Mount Moriah*, but in *Sion*, since their Return from Captivity.

They were porters.] That is, the four Persons above-mentioned.

In the companies of the children of Levi.] That were at the four Sides of the *Tabernacle*, *Jerusalem* being without Walls.

Ver. 19. *And Shallum.]* Mentioned ver. 17.

The son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren (of the house of his father.)] That is, the rest of that Family.

The Korabites were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle.] Their Service was to be Keepers of the Porches of the *Tabernacle*. From which it appears again, that the *Jews* (as I said before) did pitch a *Tabernacle* upon *Mount Sion*, till they had rebuilt the Temple on *Mount Moriah*.

And their fathers being over the host of the LORD.] Here the principal Person among them attended, taking Care of the *Tabernacle* and all its Appurtenances, which some think is meant by the *Host of the LORD*.

Were keepers of the entry.] More especially they took Care of the Court that none should enter into it but such as the Law allowed.

Ver. 20. *And Phineas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past.]* So we rightly translate the last Word, *lepanim*; which, as *R. David Gauz* observes in his *Tzemoth David* (ad A. M. 2892.) doth not signify that *Phineas* was now living, but he was Ruler of them in time past, when he was living. And thus that *Hebrew* Word is rendred, *Ruth* iv. 7. and *Psalms* cii. 26. But that he should be Ruler over these Sort of Officers seems unlikely, being the Son of the High-Priest, and after *Eleazar* High-Priest himself: Which raised him far above such a low Employment. Besides, it is evident he is here speaking of the *Levites*, not of the *Priests*, and therefore it is probable this *Phineas* was only a *Levite*, called, as his Father was, by the ancient Name of an High-Priest. See *Selden de Success. in Pontificatum*, L. i. cap. 2. fol. 117, 119.

And the LORD was with him.] In the *Targum*, the *WORD* of the *LORD* was his Helper. From which *Beckius* frames this Argument against the present *Jews*, that if he who was with *Phineas* was *JEHOVAH* the true God, and this *WORD* was with *Phineas*, then the *WORD*, in the Opinion of this Paraphrast, was *JEHOVAH* the true God.

Ver. 21. *And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah, was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.]* Here again the *Tabernacle* is mentioned, which, as I said, the first Inhabitants of the Country, after their return from Captivity, erected till the Temple could be built. For they would not be without the publick Worship of God, and a Place was necessary for it. By the *Door of the Tabernacle*, I suppose is meant the Door which let into the Court of the Priests; for the *Levites* might not go into that Court; and therefore this is not meant of the Door of the Sanctuary, as some have thought.

Ver. 22. *All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates, were two hundred and twelve.]* Who came in their Turns to discharge this Office.

These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages.] See ver. 16.

Whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain.] All things, that is, after their Return from Captivity, were put into that Order at the House of God, which *Samuel* projected, and *David* when he was settled in Peace, put in Execution. See ch. xxiii. 5. For there had been very great Confusion, no doubt, in the Service of God, in the Days of the Judges, as there had been in all other things. But when *Samuel* came to govern, he designed to put things in good Order: And especially to make the Attendance of God's Ministers at his House more regular than it had been. For which End he contrived, in all likelihood, that Method of the *Priests* and *Levites* waiting in their Courses; which (*Saul* being rejected by God) he imparted unto *David*, whom he anointed by God's Appointment to be King over *Israel*. Who accordingly, in the latter End of his Reign, disposed their Service at the *Tabernacle*.

In their set office.] Or rather (as it is in the Margin) in their Trust; for the *Hebrew* Word signifies *Fidelity*: Importing, that their Attendance at the House of God was no longer confused and disorderly (as it had been formerly, when there was sometimes too many, and sometimes too few waiting there; or they had no certain Work assigned them, or were negligent for want of Overseers) but they every one in their Course obediently went about their proper Work, and faithfully discharged it.

Ver. 23. *So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle.]* This Verse plainly instructs us that they built a *tabernacle* for the Worship of God (as I noted ver. 10.) after their return from *Babylon*, till the Temple was finished: And here the *Priests* and *Levites* attended; as in the House of the *LORD*.

By wards.] According to the Courses that *David* appointed; as it is explained, ver. 25.

Ver. 24. *In four quarters were the porters, towards the east, west, north and south.]* On the four Sides of the Tabernacle, as I observed on ver. 18. After the Temple was built, these Guards were kept, as Dr *Lightfoot* notes, on the four Quarters of the outward Wall. For the Wall that encompassed the Courts had no Gate on the West. See *Prospect of the Temple*, chap. iv. sect. 3.

Ver. 25. *And their brethren which were in the villages, were to come after seven days.]* Every Week a new Course came to attend the Service of the House of God, and to relieve their Brethren.

From time to time with them.] They came to wait their Week under the Government of the chief Porters: Who seem to have constantly dwelt at *Jerusalem*, to see the Courses disposed according as *David* had ordained. So it here follows.

Ver. 26. *For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office.]* The principal Porters were four, one at each Gate, ver. 24. to whom was committed the Care of the rest of their Brethren to see that they did their Duty.

And were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.] This I shall explain upon Chap. xxvi. 20. where it is more distinctly mentioned.

Ver. 27. *And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them; and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.]* Round about the outward Wall, before mentioned, ver. 24. For as the same learned Man observes, neither *Priests* nor *Levites* had any Lodgings in the Gates of the Courts: Nor did the *Levites* open those Doors, but the *Priests*.

Ver. 28. *And certain of them had the charge of the ministring vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.]* For the Use of the *Priests* when they ministred: Who returned, when they had done their Work, the same Number to the *Levites*, which they had received from them. This was another Duty of the *Levites*.

Ver. 29. *Some of them also were appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.]* See upon ch. xxvi. 20.

Ver. 30. *And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.]* Or rather, but some of the sons of the priests, &c. For tho' the *Levites*, had the Custody of the Spices of which the Ointment was made, yet none but the *Priests* could compound them and make the Ointment. See ch. xxx. 23, &c.

Ver. 31. *And Mattithiah one of the Levites (who was the first-born of Shallum the Korahite) had the set office (or trust) over the things that were made in the pans.]* To prepare fine Flour and Oil for the *Mincha*, or Meat-Offering that was offered every Morning and Evening, as we read *Levit. ii. 5.* The *LXX* (who here-in follow the *Talmudists*) will have this peculiarly refer to the *Mincha* offered by the High-Priest for himself and his Family: Which was the tenth Part of an *Ephab*; half in the Morn-

ing, and half in the Evening, *Levit. vi. 20, &c.*

Ver. 32. *And other of their brethren of the sons of the Cohathites, were over the shewbread to prepare it every sabbath.]* When it was set new upon the Table in the Holy Place, and the old taken away. See upon *Exod. xxv. 30.*

Ver. 33. *And these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites; who remaining in the chambers, were free.]* Others of the *Levites*, and principal Persons among them were appointed to be Singers, and attended nothing else: But dwelt in some Chambers about the Temple, free from all other Employment. And the Reason why they dwelt there was, that they might not be defiled, and so made unfit at any time for that Ministry: And that they might be ready at hand to attend upon it.

For they were employed in that work day and night.] In learning and teaching to sing, and to play upon Instruments both wind and stringed: As appears from Chapter xxvi. This was wholly a new thing, *Moses* having ordained nothing concerning Singing and Musick in the House of God, and seems (as it is objected in the Book of *Cofri*) to be contrary to what he commanded, *Deut. xii. 32. thou shalt not add unto it, (that is, to the Law) nor take from it:* But they answer very well, that this Command concerned the People only, who were forbidden out of their own Heads, as we speak, to innovate any thing, and frame Laws to themselves out of their own Reasonings. But it did not oblige Prophets and Divine Men, such as *Moses* was: And therefore *David* had Authority from God (who had not bound up himself to add nothing) to do what he did; as *Solomon* afterwards had to set up another Altar in the midst of the Court, upon a special Occasion, 2 *Cbron. vii. 7, 8, 9.* and *Nehemiah* to require but a third Part of a Shekel of the People, ch. x. 32. Thus *Sepher Cofri*, Par. III. Sect. 11, 12.

Ver. 34. *These chief fathers of the Levites, were chief throughout their generations.]* These were principal Persons, among whose Families had always been eminent Men, who were chosen for this Service.

These dwelt at Jerusalem.] They were settled there, for the greater Convenience of attending the Morning and Evening Service at the Temple, without much trouble. But these Words seem to comprehend a great deal more, viz. that not only these chief of the *Levites*, but all those whom he hath mentioned from ver. 3. unto this Verse, lived at *Jerusalem*, and came back with *Zerubbabel*.

Ver. 35. *And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wives name was Maachab.]* From hence to the End of the Chapter, the same Genealogy is set down again, which we had in the foregoing Chapter (ver. 29, 30, &c.) and in the same Words: And therefore I shall not here transcribe them. Of this I can give no Account but that this Narrative of the Descent and Family of *Saul* is repeated, the better to join the following History to it, concerning the Death of that King. But if we could give no Account of it, *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks it is not irreligious to acknowledge that

that in these *Jewish* Genealogies, which are very long and useless to us, some Errors may have crept in by the Negligence of Transcribers. Who in copying of them might not attend sometimes, but be drowsy; as we are apt to be; when we are about any tedious Work and not very profitable, in which if there be any Error, the Church suffers no Damage by it. But there is no need of this.

C H A P. X.

Verse 1. **N**OW the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.] This Verse, and those that follow, to ver. 13. have been explained upon 1 Sam. xxxi. where the same History is related; in the same Words, and with very little Difference. And it is repeated here, to make way for the History of David, (which is mainly intended in the rest of this Book) who by Saul's Death was advanced to the Crown.

Ver. 2. And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons, and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul.

Ver. 3. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.

Ver. 4. Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

Ver. 5. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.

Ver. 6. So Saul died and his three sons, and all his house died together.] That is, all that were present with him in the Battle: And his Family had such a Blow by their Fall, that it never recovered it self. For tho' Ishbosheth reigned over a Part of the Country, yet it was not in any Splendor: Such a deadly Wound being given to the House of Saul, that it did not long survive him in the Kingly Authority.

Ver. 7. And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley, saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.] By the Valley is meant, the Towns in the open Country, which were not fortified. See 1 Sam. xxxi. 7.

Ver. 8. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.

Ver. 9. And when they had stripped him, they took his head.] Which they cut off from his Body, as we read, 1 Sam. xxxi. 9.

And his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.] That publick Thanksgiving might be given by them to their Gods, for this Victory.

Ver. 10. And they put his armour in the house of their gods.] In the Temple of Ashtaroth, as the same Book tells us, 1 Sam. xxxi. 10.

And fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.] These two, Dagon and Ashtaroth, were the principal Gods of the Country of the Philistines; unto whom they sent these Trophies of their Victory. And the Place forenamed informs us where they fastened his Body, after they had separated his Head from it, and stripp'd off the Skin and the Hair; for the Hebrew Word signifies a Skull.

Ver. 11. And when all Jabesh-Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul.] By Jabesh-Gilead, is meant the People of the City, and of the Territory round about it.

Ver. 12. They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons; and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.] This was a noble Instance of their Courage, and of their Love and Gratitude to their Prince: Who had some excellent Qualities in him, and had highly oblig'd this City in the Beginning of his Reign: As I have observed on the Book of Samuel. If we may believe Josephus, there was a Law among the Jews, that they who killed themselves should be denied Burial: For this was all the Punishment that could be inflicted on them after they were dead, for so great a Sin. Yet David highly approved this Fact of the Men of Jabesh-Gilead, who buried Saul: And therefore the Jews make this Exception to the Rule, That if they killed themselves merely to avoid that Reproach which might be cast upon them if they lived, they might be buried: And they instance in Samson and Saul. Who they fancy repented of his many Sins, after Samuel had appeared to him, and told him of his sad Fate. But the two following Verses seem to contradict this. See Grotius in his Book de Jure Belli & Pacis, Lib. ii. Cap. 19. Sect. 5.

Ver. 13. So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it.] His two great Transgressions, (one against the express Order and Command of God by Samuel, and the other against a known Law of Moses) were his sparring the Analekites, and his consulting the Witch of Endor: Which were plain Proofs that he did not mind God, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 14. And enquired not of the LORD.] He did not regard him, as he ought to have done: For otherwise he did enquire of him, (1 Sam. xxviii. 6.) but not with a religious Mind.

Therefore he slew him, and turned the Kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.] Kingdoms are never translated from one Family to another, but Injustice and Impiety go before, as Grotius here notes. Which the Son of Sirach expresses admirably, Eccles. x. 8. Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is translated from one people to another.

C H A P. XI.

Verse 1. **T**HEN.] That is, after the Death of Ishbosheth: For many things passed after the Death of Saul, which are here omitted.

ted. As the coming of the *Amalekite* to David with the News of it; his Lamentation over *Saul* and *Jonathan*; his anointing at *Hebron* over the Tribe of *Judah*; the Death of *Abner*, and then of *Ishbosheth*. After which this Author relates the Promotion of *David* to be King of all the Tribes of *Israel*, by the full Consent of all the People.

All Israel gathered themselves together to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.] By all *Israel* is meant the Elders of all their Tribes. 2 Sam. v. 1. where this Verse is explained.

Ver. 2. *And moreover, in time past, when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out, and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.*] See 2 Sam. v. 2. where there are the very same Words.

Ver. 3. *Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron, and David made a covenant with them in Hebron, before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.*] See there 2 Sam. v. 3.

According to the word of the LORD by Samuel.] These Words are added unto those in the Book of *Samuel*, to shew how the People came to know that God told *David* (as they say in the foregoing Verse) he should govern *Israel*. *Samuel* declared it to him, and published it, no doubt, among the People.

Ver. 4. *And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus.*] See concerning this Place, *Judges* xix. 10.

Where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.] See 2 Sam. v. 6.

Ver. 5. *And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless, David took the castle of Zion, which the city of David.*] The insolent Language of the *Jebusites* is recorded more largely, in 2 Sam. v. 6. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 6. *And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first, shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiab went up first, and was chief.*] It is evident *Joab* was before this in a great Station, commanding all the Forces of *Judah*; as may be gathered from 2 Sam. ii. 13, 14. and iii. 22, 23. But now he was a Commander in Chief of all the Forces both of *Judah* and *Israel*; which made him very powerful: Or, perhaps, *Abishai* being his elder Brother, was General of the Forces before; and this Place gives an Account how *Joab* came to have the Pre-eminence, by this great Atchievement.

Ver. 7. *And David dwelt in the castle, therefore they called it, the city of David.*] Because here he chose to have his constant Residence: In order to which he enlarged and adorned it with many Buildings, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about.* See 2 Sam. v. 9.

And Joab repaired the rest of the city.] He repaired perhaps the Fortifications, which had been, in the Time of the Siege, much shattered. And, as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks, built some Houses, for the quartering of his Soldiers.

Ver. 9. *So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts was with him.*] The WORD of the LORD was his Help, as the *Targum* expresses it. See 2 Sam. v. 10.

Ver. 10. *These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom.*] Having touch'd upon *David's* Promotion to the Throne, and his Settlement in *Sion*, he next thought fit to relate who those valiant Men were that assisted him in his Advancement, and helped to establish him in his Authority. They were such in all likelihood as had accompanied him, during his Persecution by *Saul*; when they gave *David* many Proofs of their Valour and Affection, as they also did afterward.

And with all Israel, to make him king.] A great many of the *Israelites*, as is related in the next Chapter, came to *David* before the Death of *Saul*; Believing he was designed by God to be their King.

According to the word of the LORD, concerning Israel.] That *David* should be King over all *Israel*: Which Word was delivered by *Samuel*, and known to all the People, as well as to *Saul* and *Jonathan*.

Ver. 11. *And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time.*] I have explained this upon 2 Sam. xxii. 8. where I observed, how *Kimchi* reconciles this Place to that, which saith he slew eight hundred. But I now think it plainer to say, That he slew eight hundred with his own Hand, and thereby routed the Enemy, and put them to Flight; in which five hundred more were killed in the Pursuit. All which might be said to be slain by him; because the Slaughter he made was the Cause the rest were slain. Or, as *Mayers* (upon *Seder Olam*) interprets it; after he had slain three hundred, he was so little tired, that he slew as many more as made eight hundred.

Ver. 12. *And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Abothi.*] The Son of *Abothi*, as *Kimchi* understands it; for this is not the Name of a Country, but of a Family.

Who was one of the three mighties.] See 2 Sam. xxiii. 9.

Ver. 13. *He was with David at Pas-dammin.*] The same with *Ephes-dammin*, 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

And there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley, and the people fled from before the Philistines.

Ver. 14. *And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD saved them by a great deliverance.*] All this is related, and hath been explained in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 15. *Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam, and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.*] See there, ver. 13.

Ver. 16. *And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines garison was then at Bethlehem.*] See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 17. *And David longed and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate.*] See ver. 15. He did not desire any one should venture to fetch him some of this Water, but in a very hot Day, said, as we sometimes do, What would I not give for a Draught of those cool
and

and refreshing Waters? Which he remembred he had drunk of freely in his Youth.

Ver. 18. *And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the LORD.*

Ver. 19. *And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mighties.]* See all this explained in that Place, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 20. *And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three.]* See 2 Sam. xxiii. 18. There are but two here mentioned; the third, *Abarbinel* thinks, was *Adina* the Son of *Shiza*, mentioned ver. 42. who is said to be a Captain of the *Reubenites*, and thirty with him.

Ver. 21. *Of the three he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain.]* Perhaps he was the first, and led them on, in that bold Exploit at *Bethlehem*.

Howbeit, he attained not unto the first three.] But came short of them in their great Atchievements.

Ver. 22. *Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab; also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.]* See 2 Sam. xxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high, &c.]* The Country of *Egypt* was famous for Men of vast Bigness, as we learn from *Herodotus*, L. ii. cap. 130, 143, 153, 175, 176. See *Huetius* in his *Quæstiones Alnetanæ*, L. ii. p. 180. where he observes out of *Pliny*, that in *Æthiopia* there was a People that were eight Cubits high, L. vi. cap. 30. L. vii. cap. 2.

Ver. 24. *These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties.]* See all this explained in the fore-named Book, 2 Sam. xxiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 25. *Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the first three.]* He sets a Mark of Honour upon him as a Man of great Reputation among the thirty; tho' he did not rise up to the Pitch of the first three, nor of *Abishai*, tho' it is likely he excell'd the third. See there, ver. 23.

And David set him over his guard.] The *Cerethites* and *Peletites*. Or, as some take it, he made him President of his Council, as the *Hebrew* Word imports, (so *Kimchi*) there being a rare Conjunction in him of Wisdom with Valour.

Ver. 26. *Also the valiant men of the armies were Asabel the brother of Joab, Elbanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem.]* See there, ver. 24. These were chief Commanders in the Army, either Colonels, as we speak, or Captains; and they were under the Command of the three foregoing great Men, who were over them, as they were over the Soldiers. But these great Men were below the first three: Who are said in the tenth Verse of this Chapter, to be mighty

men to David, (as the Words are in the *II. brew*) because they attended upon him continually, as the Keepers of his Body; and had no other Command.

Ver. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite.]* See 2 Sam. xxiii. 25.

Ver. 28. *Ira the son of Ikkeish the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite.]* See there, ver. 26. All the rest that follow are mentioned in that Chapter of the second Book of *Samuel*, with some Difference in their Names, as I have there noted. Some others also are added, being Men of great Note, tho' not equal to the above-named. Particularly, he relates who were the chief Commanders, in the Borders of the Kingdom beyond *Jordan*, v. 42, &c. This appears by the Names of their Country, which was beyond that River.

There is a little Difficulty in the thirty eighth Verse, where *Joel*, who is called *Igal* in 2 Sam. xxiii. 36. (there being nothing more common than such Alterations in Names) is said to be the Brother of *Nathan*: Which seems not to consist with what is said in the other Place, that he was the son of *Nathan*. But the Account of this is easy, for he might be both, if he was his adopted Son; for want of Children: The Word *Son* often signifying no more than a Nephew, as the Word *Brother* doth one near of Kin. As for the rest of the Variations, *Conradus Pellicanus* resolves, that we need not trouble our selves about the Errors of Transcribers, which we may acknowledge, in such Matters as these, without any Prejudice to Faith, Truth, or good Manners. So he concludes this Chapter.

C H A P. XII.

Verse 1. **N**OW these are they that came to David to *Ziklag*, while he yet kept himself close, because of *Saul* the son of *Kish*: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war.] This Author thought fit to do those the Honour of being remembred (which is omitted in the Book of *Samuel*) who came and joined themselves to *David*, when he was in Exile: And were afterward very assistant to him in his Wars. They are said to come to him, while he kept himself close because of *Saul*: Because they pitying *David's* Condition, who was forced to skulk in secret Places to secure himself from *Saul's* Fury, designed to help him, and it is likely left their Habitations, and went to seek him: Tho' they did not actually join him till he came to *Ziklag*.

Ver. 2. *They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left.]* Which gave them a great Advantage in War: And made them more valuable Soldiers. See *Judges* xx. 16.

In hurling stones, and shooting arrows out of a bow.] They were excellent Slingers, as well as Archers.

Even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.] There was some extraordinary Cause which moved some of *Saul's* Kindred, as well as of his Tribe to desert him, and go over to *David*. Either the great Virtue of *David* attracted them, or they abhorred to see an innocent Person so violently persecuted; or, perhaps, they were pious

ous Persons, who had a great Regard to the Words of *Samuel*, concerning *David's* Right to the Kingdom.

Ver. 3. *The chief was Abiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite, and Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth, and Berachah, and Jechu the Antothite.*] There is mention before of *Azmaveth* (ch. viii. 36.) as descended from *Micah* the Son of *Mephibosheth*, the Grand-Son of *Saul*.

Ver. 4. *And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty.*] I suppose there were thirty *Benjamites* came over to *David* at one time, and this was their Leader.

And Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabab the Gederathite.

Ver. 5. *Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite.*

Ver. 6. *Elkanah, and Jeshab, and Azareel, and Jozer, and Jashobeam the Korhites.*

Ver. 7. *And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jehoram of Gedor.*] These were the principal Persons among the thirty, mentioned ver. 4. the rest perhaps were not of such Note.

Ver. 8. *And of the Gadites there separated themselves*] From their Countrymen and Families, which they left to follow *David*.

Unto David, into the hold of of the wilderness.] There are several Holds, or inaccessible Places mentioned, where *David* secured himself from *Saul's* Persecution. See 1 *Sam.* xxii. 4. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 22. But some think he still speaks of those that came to *David* at *Ziklag*: Which may be called a Hold, they think, as the City of *David* is (ch. xi. 7.) because he fortified it.

Men of might, and men of war, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler.] Under these are comprehended all Weapons of War, which they could manage skillfully; being bred to it, and wanting no courage to engage any Enemy.

Whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.] They had a Fierceness in their Countenances; which terrified their Enemies: Who durst not look them in their Face, but ran away as soon as they saw them. But they could not save themselves by flight, being pursued so swiftly by these Men, that they overtook them and slew them. *Bochart* observes out of *Aristotle*, that Lions have Faces more like Men, than any other Creatures, but very stern and terrible.

Ver. 9. *Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third.*] They are reckoned up thus distinctly, according to the Dignity and Precedence which they had in their own Country; or according to the Order wherein they came to *David*.

Ver. 10. *Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,*

Ver. 11. *Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,*

Ver. 12. *Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,*

Ver. 13. *Jeremiah the tenth, Machbani the eleventh.*

Ver. 14. *These were the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.*] They did not bring an Host of Men with them, but they

had been Commanders of the Army in their own Country. Or, when *David* came to the Crown, he thought them worthy to be preferred, and the lowest of them was made a Centurion.

Ver. 15. *These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks.*] This is an Instance of their fearless Valour, that they ventured over *Jordan* in the most dangerous Season: And perhaps swam over, when the Stream was most rapid and violent, to help their Brethren. See *Josh.* iii. 15.

And they put to flight all them of the vallies, both toward the east, and toward the west.] When *Saul* was engaged to attend the Motions of the *Philistines*, it is likely some People both of the Eastern and Western Countries, which bordered upon *Jordan*, laid hold of this Opportunity to invade and spoil the Land thereabout; which moved these Men to go to their Relief, and God gave them a great Victory over them. Where these Valleys lay, and what Enemies these Men encountred, is nowhere recorded.

Ver. 16. *And there came of the children of Benjamin, and Judah, to the hold unto David.*] Besides those of *Saul's* Kindred before mentioned, there were others of that Tribe, together with some of *Judah*, who came to him when he was in the Hold, mentioned ver. 8. which I conjectured might be *Ziklag*; but I rather think it was some of the Holds he was in, when he lay in the Wilderness.

Ver. 17. *And David went out to meet them.*] They were so considerable, either for their Number, or Quality, that *David* went out (attended no doubt with some of his Men) to meet them, before they came to the Hold.

And answered and said unto them.] After the first Salutation which they made him, he replied in the following Words.

If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit unto you.] As much as to say, if you be really Friends, you are welcome, and I will make a League with you.

But if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.] He knew himself to be so innocent, both with respect to *Saul* and all other Men, whom he had no way injured, that he doubted not God would protect him, and do him right against these Men, if they came with bad Intentions to him. What should make him suspect there might possibly be some Treachery designed, is not now to be known. Perhaps some had before this come with Pretences of great Kindness to him, whom he had found to be false: Which made him now more cautious whom he entertained.

Ver. 18. *Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains.*] The Spirit of Power, saith the Targum: That is, God powerfully moved him with an heroical Boldness, and Resolution, in the Name of them all, to profess their Fidelity to *David*, in such pathetic Words, as convinced him they were Friends. *Rashi* compares with this, those Words in *Judges* vi. 34. But none hath discoursed so well upon these Words as *Maimonides*, who observes, that

by *the Spirit* in such Places as this, is not to be understood, a Power to speak or declare any thing: But only to excite those who felt it, to do some excellent thing either for particular Persons, or the whole Church. With this Power *Moses* was endued, when he came to Man's Estate, and was moved to smite the *Egyptian* who injured one of his Brethren. Which Power did not leave him, but remained still with him when he fled into *Midian*. See *Exod.* ii. 17. This Power exerted it self in *David* after he was anointed, 1 *Sam.* xv. 13. xvii. 34. See *More Nervoachim*, Par. ii. cap. 45.

And he said, thine are we, David, and on thy side thou son of Jesse:] He seems to have broken out into this Speech with a sudden Violence, being unable to hear with Patience their Fidelity questioned. For the Words *and he said*, are not in the *Hebrew* Text; nor those *are we*: But only, *Thine, David, &c.* Which is a broken Speech, expressing great Passion.

Peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers.] He most affectionately wishes all Happiness to him, and to all that came to his Assistance: Which implies a Desire they might not prosper, if they did not now sincerely come to his Help.

For thy God helpeth thee.] God they saw was on his Side, who by his marvellous Deliverances of him, had shewn he had a special Affection to him, and Care of him: And therefore they believed would bless those that came to his Help.

Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.] He preferred them to considerable Commands in his Army, when he came to be King: For it is not likely he would set them above those, who had served him all the Time of his Exile; they being but new Comers.

Ver. 19. *And there fell some of Manasseh to David (when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle, but they helped them not.)* It seems they offered their Service to *David*, when he was going with the *Philistines* to help them against *Saul*, in the last Battle which he fought. This shews a strange Zeal for *David*, and Abhorrence of *Saul's* Enmity to him, that they should then join their Forces with him, when he took part with the *Philistines*. But neither they, nor the rest of *David's* Men were admitted to fight in that Battle.

For the lords of the Philistines, upon advertisement, sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul, to the jeopardy of our heads.) First kill them, and then flee to *Saul* and make his Peace with him, at the Cost of their Heads. See 1 *Sam.* xxix. 3, &c.

Ver. 20. *As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elibu, and Zithai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.]* These came to him, in that nick of Time, when he went from the *Philistines*, in his return to *Ziklag*. Which fell out very opportunely, for they being valiant Men, assisted him against that Band of Robbers, the *Amalekites*, who had burnt *Ziklag*, and carried Captive their Wives and Children. He had indeed only six hundred Men with him in that

Expedition, but these were of the Number, who, as it follows, did him great Service in Recovery of his Losses.

Ver. 21. *And they helped David against the band of the rovers, for they were all mighty men of valour.]* They were not at all disheartned, when they found *David* in such exceeding great Distress; but being most valiant Captains, offered their Service to him in the Pursuit of his Enemies.

And were captains in the host.] In their own Country they had been Commanders of a Company of Men; many of which, it is likely, they brought over to *David* with them. Or, they followed after them, as is intimated in the following Words.

Ver. 22. *For at that time day by day, there came to David to help him.]* After the Battle wherein *Saul* was slain, so many resorted to him every Day, that his Forces grew very considerable.

Until it was a great host, like the host of God.] A very formidable Host. Which he compares to the Host of Heaven (the Stars or the Angels) because they were numerous, and many of them illustrious Persons.

Ver. 23. *And these are the Numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron.]* The great Resort to him at *Ziklag*, mentioned in the foregoing Verse, made greater Numbers flock to him, when by God's Direction he went to *Hebron*: And they brought their Arms with them, that they might be ready to fight for him.

To turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the L O R D.] They remembered what *Samuel* had said, and resolved to anoint him King, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4.

Ver. 24. *The children of Judah that bare shield and spear, were six thousand and eight hundred ready armed to the war.]* In the Place before-named we read, *the Men of Judah* came and anointed him King: Which signifies the whole Tribe consented to it. Therefore these six thousand and eight hundred Men were only the first that came, and perhaps appeared in the Name of the rest.

Ver. 25. *Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.]* Tho' *David* was anointed King only over the Tribe of *Judah*, (one of *Saul's* Posterity reigning over *Israel*) yet some of other Tribes came and owned *David* for their King; particularly a great Number of the Tribe of *Simeon*, who were near Neighbours to *Judah*.

Ver. 26. *Of the children of Levi, four thousand and six hundred.]* Those came out of several Tribes, into which they were dispersed, yet all agreed to shew their Affection to *David*.

Ver. 27. *And Jehoiada was the Leader of the Aaronites.]* He was not the High-Priest, for *Abiathar* held that Place: But he was Chief, as *Jarchi* thinks, of one of the Courses of the Priests; and now the chief Commander of those of the Family of *Aaron*, who came to invite *David* to take the Government upon him. He was a Man of War also, and brought these Priests armed with him: For it is said, of all that

that came to *David* to *Hebron*, (*ver.* 23.) that they were ready armed for the War; in Case any should oppose their Design. See *Selden de Succession. ad Pontificatum*, Lib. i. Cap. 3.

And with him were three thousand and seven hundred.] Besides those of the *Levites* before-named.

Ver. 28. *And Zadok a young man, mighty of valour, and of his fathers house twenty and two captains.]* It is likely, he is the same Person who was made High-Priest in *Solomon's* time who was now very young, but had a great deal of Courage; whom two and twenty of his Family followed, who were Commanders of so many Companies.

Ver. 29. *And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand.]* We read of several of this Tribe, and of *Saul's* Kindred, that came to *David* before this, (*ver.* 1, 2, 16.) but now a greater Number came over to him: Which shews his Interest to be considerably grown among them.

For hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.] But still a Multitude of them (as it is in the *Hebrew*) adhered to the House of *Saul*, and endeavoured to keep the Crown in that Family. And, as *Solomon Jarchi*, and *D. Kimchi*, and others understand it, the three thousand before-mentioned being of *Saul's* Kindred, were of that Mind, looking upon his Grand-son as the lawful Heir of the Kingdom, who ought to succeed in it: But now they altered their Opinion, and came to *David*.

Ver. 30. *And of the children of Ephraim, twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers.]* This was so great a Number, that by their Defection from the House of *Saul*, it must needs be extremely weakned: Especially since they were Men of such great Account in that Tribe.

Ver. 31. *And of the half tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand.]* He speaks of those on this Side *Jordan* for of those beyond it on the other Side, he speaks afterward, *ver.* 37.

Which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.] These were appointed to go in the Name of the rest of their Brethren, and assure *David* of their Affection to him: Being picked (as we speak) out of the whole Tribe, for this Purpose. And some think the Names of these Men were set down in the publick Register of the Kings of *Judah*: From which this Author transcribed it.

Ver. 32. *And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times.]* The *Targum*, and many of the *Jews*, (particularly *Maimonides* in *Rosch Hasbanah*) take this to signify their Skill, in computing the Beginning of their Years, and Months, and Inter-calations, that it might be certainly known when their Feasts were to celebrated. Others think they were great *Astronomers*: Whence the *Hebrew* Doctors say, that the name of this Tribe was engraven in the Saphire in the High-Priest's Breast-plate, and that their Banner was of a Sky-Colour, having the Figures of the Sun, Moon, and Stars wrought in it, because of their Skill in the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies. Others take it to signify their Skill in the

Weather, whereby they knew the proper Season for Sowing, Planting, Reaping, and Navigation. Many such like Fancies there are, which seem impertinent to the present Business: Which required Men of great Abilities in political Affairs; who could discern what was fit to be done in the various Cases of human Life: And particularly what was good for the Commonwealth in all Turns of Affairs. Thus *Solomon Jarchi* himself. *They knew how to advise and give Counsel, according to the Nature and Circumstances of all Cases: Which sort of Men David stood in great need of at this time, to consult the best means to confirm him in his kingdom.*

To know what Israel ought to do.] These Words shew they were Men skillful in secular Affairs: And now, I suppose, told the *Israelites* it was the proper Time to think of *David*, and make him their King; after the *Philistines* had gained so great a Victory over *Saul*, and destroyed his Family. For none was so likely to quell the *Philistines* as he, who had so often beaten them.

The heads of them were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their commandment.] These two hundred were eminent Persons among them; and were of such known Wisdom and Judgment, that they had all the rest of their Tribe at their Beck.

Ver. 33. *Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand.]* This is the greatest Number of any Tribe that went over to *David*: That is, gave him Assurance of their Readiness to assist him to make him King of *Israel*. For it is not likely, that so many as are here mentioned, went to *Hebron*, as soon as *David* came thither.

Which could keep rank.] Men well disciplined, Or, as some understand it, Men that would stand their ground, and not flinch, when they were assaulted by their Enemies.

They were not of double heart.] But all sincerely affected to *David*, tho' there were so many of them. Thus some understand it; but others think, it rather relates to the foregoing Words, that they had not a counterfeit Courage, but would stand to it (as we speak) with a firm Resolution, to die rather than stagger in their Undertaking. For this is affirmed of them all, that they came with a perfect Heart unto *David*, (*ver.* 38.) and therefore needs not to be said of these in particular, there being no Reason to suspect their Loyalty.

Ver. 34. *And of Naphtali, a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.*

Ver. 35. *And of the Danites expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.*

Ver. 36. *And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand.*

Ver. 37. *And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and of the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.]* Here were so many thousands of valiant Men expert in War, reckoned up in the several Tribes of *Israel*; that *Saul* could not well have been overthrown in Battle by the *Philistines*, if God had not forsaken him, and the Hearts of his People had not been alienated from him.

Ver. 38. *All these men of war that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest of Israel were of one heart to make David king.*] After the Death of *Ishbosheth* (see 2 Sam. v.) all Israel, *communi consilio*, with one Consent (as *Maimonides* explains this Phrase, *with one Heart, More Nevochim*, P. i. Cap. 39.) came and joined with their Brethren, who were gone over to him. And they were such a Number, Men of such undaunted Spirits and expert in war, who crouded in to him, that the like is not to be found in any History. For, as *Herodotus* saith in his *Polyhymnia*, in the Army of *Xerxes* there were πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἄνδρες, a World of People, but few Men; that is, Men of Courage and Conduct: With which *David's* Army so abounded, that every one of this vast Number seems to have been fit to command in an Army.

Ver. 39. *And there they were with David three days eating and drinking.*] The famous Historian *Dion* (as *Victorinus Strigelius* here observes) saith, he never saw a more splendid and pompous Show than that was, when the Emperor *Severus* entred *Rome*. But here was a far more noble Feast, which lasted three Days, for three hundred forty eight thousand and eight hundred brave Men.

For their brethren had prepared for them.] They who were before actually gone over to *David*, and others about *Hebron*, hearing of such a great Concourse of People, had made a Preparation for their Entertainment.

Ver. 40. *Moreover, they that were nigh, even unto Issachar, and Zebulon, and Naphtali.*] All the neighbouring Countries brought in Provisions for those who dwelt more remote: Their common Concernments begetting great Love and Kindness (as there ought always to be, especially on such Occasions) for all their Brethren, tho' never so distant from them.

Brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen.] Whom they employed in that Country, in carrying Burdens: For Horses were very scarce among them. So *Bochart* observes, that they did not only ride upon Mules; but some of them were ἄχθοφόροι, employed in carrying Burdens, as these were: Others were ζευγῖται, yoked to draw Chariots, *Lib. II. Hieroz. P. i. Cap. 19.* The same hē observes of Oxen, that tho' they seem made rather for the Plough, yet they made them serve for the other Purpose also, of bearing Burdens.

And meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly] All sort of Provisions for a great Feast.

For there was joy in Israel.] Their Hearts were enlarged with Joy, to see an End of their Division, by their Union under such a King; as they might reasonably hope would procure great Happiness to them.

C H A P. XIII.

Verse 1. **A**ND *David consulted with the captains of thousands, and hundreds, and with every leader.*] With all the principal Persons in Authority, who had any Command over others. For it is a dangerous thing for a

Prince, especially in the Beginning of his Reign, to rely wholly upon himself alone, and not advise with others.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto all the congregation of Israel.*] Who were represented by those great Men, whom he had called together for their Advice.

If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God.] Whom, I suppose, he intended to consult, as well as them.

Let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in the land of Israel.] Who were not there present.

And with them also the priests and Levites which are in the cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us.] Whose Assistance was very necessary, in the sacred Work which he intended.

Ver. 3. *And let us bring again the ark of our God to us.*] In the Book of *Samuel* this is said to have been done after that which here follows, in the next Chapter, concerning *Hiram* and *David's* Wars with the *Philistines*; and so it was. Only *David* (as became a good King, whose first Care is about Religion) took Advice with the Elders of the People, as soon as he came to the Crown, concerning the bringing up of the Ark of God. Which was put in Execution afterward, when they had gone to their several Countries, and spoken with the People about it; and a Time was appointed for their meeting to do it. In the mean time *Hiram* sent his Ambassadors to him, and the *Philistines* came twice to disturb him, and were beaten by him: And then all the People met in a vast Number (it is probable at some solemn Festival) to bring the Ark to its Place.

For we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.] They were not solicitous in his Days to find a fit Place, for the Residence of the Ark of God, where they might conveniently attend upon his Worship and Service. For they were hindered by perpetual Wars, and contented themselves with going to *Gibeon*, where the Tabernacle was; tho' without the Presence of God in it. But it is probable, that *Saul*, after *David* fled from him, and he was haunted by that evil Spirit that oft came upon him, grew so prophane that he was not concerned about Religion. So the Words are in the Hebrew, *We enquired not of it, or, about it.*

Ver. 4. *And all the congregation said, that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.*] They were convinced of their Negligence, and piously disposed to comply with the King's Desire.

Ver. 5. *So David gathered all Israel together.*] Some chosen Persons out of all the Tribes with their Attendants: (who represented all the rest) which were thirty thousand, 2 Sam. vi. 1.

From Shihor of Egypt, even to the entering of Hemath.] The former of these, *Shihor* was the Southern Bounds, as *Hemath* was the Northern of the Land of *Canaan*. And by *Sihor* (called in other Places the River of *Egypt*) the *Targum*, and most of the *Jews*, even *Abarbinel* himself, understand the River *Nile*. But there is great Reason to take it for a little Branch of that River, as I have shewn upon *Gen. xv. 18.* And see upon *Num. xxxiv. 5. Josh. xiii. 3.*

To bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.] Where it had been a long time, ever since it returned out of the Land of the Philistines. See 1 Sam. vi. ult. vii. i.

Ver. 6. *And David went up, and all Israel to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belongeth to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.]* See 2 Sam. vi. i.

Ver. 7. *And they carried the ark of God in a new cart, out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Abio drave the cart.]* They had so long been without it, that they had forgot, how it ought to be carried. See 2 Sam. vi. 3.

Ver. 8. *And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.]* See there, Verse 5.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled.*

Ver. 10. *And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put forth his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.*

Ver. 11. *And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza; wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day.]* All this hath been explained in the fore-named place, ver. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 12. *And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?] See there, v. 9.* It is an old Observation that *pœna ad unum, metus ad plures pervenit*, Punishment falls upon one, the Fear of it falls upon all: Which justifies the Severity of God, as not contrary to his Mercy, in such Cases.

Ver. 13. *So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.]* See there also ver. 10.

Ver. 14. *And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months: And the LORD blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.]* See there ver. 11. The Targum here pretends to give us an Account how God blessed this Family, by increasing it prodigiously with a numerous Issue; of which the Jews were so desirous, that they could think of no greater Blessing. For his Wife and eight Daughters (says that Paraphrast) the Wives of his Sons, brought each of them at one Birth eight Sons: So that Fathers and Sons made up fourscore and one. But tho' History acquaints us with wondrous Births of many Children at a Time; yet there is no Ground to believe this of so many in one Family.

C H A P. XIV.

Ver. 1. **N**OW Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house.

Ver. 2. *And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel, for his kingdom was lift up on high, because of his people Israel.]* See both these Verses explained in 2 Sam.

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v. 11, 12. where the same Thing is related, almost in the same Words.

Ver. 3. *And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.]* After he came from Hebron, and had possessed himself of Jerusalem, he took more Wives and Concubines also, as we read 2 Sam. v. 13. But they are all here called *Wives*; for so they were: Tho' not principal Wives (as *Pellicanus* notes) that is, not such as governed the Family, for that the Concubines did not.

Ver. 4. *Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,*

Ver. 5. *And Ibbai, and Elisua, and Elpalet.*

Ver. 6. *And Nogab, and Nepheg, and Japhia;*

Ver. 7. *And Elisama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.]* In 2 Sam. v. 14, 15, 16. there are but eleven mentioned, whereas here are thirteen; of which I gave some Account in that Place. To which I shall here add, that some of them died in their Childhood, which are reckoned here, but not in the other Place. For here are two *Eliphalets*, the first of which dying young, the last was so called to preserve his Memory. So *Kimchi* writes very judiciously; perhaps neither the first *Eliphalet*, nor *Nogab*, are mentioned in the Book of *Samuel*, because they were not then living, but they are recorded here: Because the Author of this Book proposed to himself to give an Account of all *David's* Sons born at *Jerusalem*, as he saith ver. 4. As for the Difference between *Elpalet* ver. 5. and *Eliphalet* in this Verse, *Simeon de Muis* hath well observed, it ought not to make any one think there is an Error either here or in any other Place: For that King of *France* who is commonly called *Clodoveus*, is called by *Cassiodore Luduinus*, *Ludovicus*, and in *Hincmar Hludovicus*: Such Differences there are in the Pronunciation of the same Name, the Examples of which are infinite, as he speaks in his *Varia Sacra*.

Ver. 8. *And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard of it, and went out against them.* See 2 Sam. v. 17.

Ver. 9. *And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.]* This Phrase *spread themselves*, seems to import that they were very numerous, and assured themselves of Victory. See there ver. 18.

Ver. 10. *And David enquired of God, saying, shall I go up against the Philistines? And wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, go up, for I will deliver them into thine hand.*

Ver. 11. *So they came up to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there. Then said David, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place, Baal-perazim.]* See these Verses explained in 2 Sam. v. 19, 20.

Ver. 12. *And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burnt with fire.]* No wonder they could not preserve such Gods as could not preserve them. Which David would not honour, as they had done the Ark when they took it, but burnt them. See there, ver. 21.

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Ver. 13.

Ver. 13. *And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.*

Ver. 14. *Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, go not up after them, turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees.*

Ver. 15. *And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines.*

Ver. 16. *David therefore did as the Lord commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.]* See there, 2 Sam. v. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Ver. 17. *And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.]* Upon all those, upon whom the Fame of him came: That is, all the neighbouring Countries.

CHAP. XV.

Verse 1. **A**ND David made him houses in the city of David.] He had need of many Houses, because he had many Wives and Children, as we read before: Who could not all well live in one House, unless we suppose it to be very large, and to contain many Apartments, which may be called Houses.

And prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.] As we read in 2 Sam. vi.

17. For he did not think fit to bring the Tabernacle from Gibeon, because he intended shortly to build an House for the Ark. Or, as Conradus Pellicanus thinks, the Tabernacle of Moses, having been long neglected, was grown ruinous: And he thought it better to prepare a new Tabernacle, than repair the old.

Ver. 2. *Then David said, none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.]* The former Miscalriage, when they brought up the Ark from Kirjath-jearim, had taught him to use it with greater Reverence, according to the Prescription of the Law; which ordered the Levites to carry it upon their Shoulders. See Numb. iv. 15. vii. 9.

Ver. 3. *And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the Lord unto his place, which he had prepared for it.* See 2 Sam. vi. 15.

Ver. 4. *And David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites.]* Whom he ordered should be sent for before, when he first attempted to bring up the Ark, but we do not read that they came, (ch. xiii. 2, 5.) therefore now he actually got them together.

Ver. 5. *Of the sons of Kohath: Uriel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twenty.]* The Sons of Kohath are mentioned in Exod. vi. 17, 18. and Uriel is none of them: Therefore he was his Grand-Son, who proved so famous, that his Descendants are reckoned in the first Place.

Ver. 6. *Of the sons of Merari; Asaiab the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 7. *Of the sons of Gershom; Joel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty.*

Ver. 8. *Of the sons of Elizaphan: Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred.]* He was the Son of Uzziel, the youngest Son of Kohath. See Exod. vi. 18, 23. Num. iv. 3.

Ver. 9. *Of the sons of Hebron: Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore.*

Ver. 10. *Of the sons of Uzziel: Amminadab the chief, and his brethren, an hundred and twelve.]* These two last named were the Sons of Kohath.

Ver. 11. *And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests.]* I have observed here before, that Zadok was in the greatest Favour with David: And therefore is mentioned first, tho' Abiathar was the High-Priest, and Zadok only the second Priest. See upon 2 Sam. xv. 27, 29.

And for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiab, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab.] The six Persons mentioned in the foregoing Verses.

Ver. 12. *And said unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify your selves, both ye and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel, unto the place that I have prepared for it.]* This Sanctification was by washing their Bodies, and Garments, abstaining from their Wives, and other Purifications. See Exod. xix. 10, 15.

Ver. 13. *For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us.]* It seems that Priests and Levites were not well acquainted with the Law; or, the Ark having been very long in one Place, they had forgot how it ought to be removed: And did not sanctify themselves, and seriously consider their Duty. At least, they that were then present (for the Chief were not then assembled, as I said v. 4.) were ignorant, or careless.

For that we sought him not after the due order.] This good King doth not wholly excuse himself, and lay all the Blame on them: But puts himself into the Number of those, who were negligent in this Matter. For it was his Duty as well as theirs, to look into the Law, and pray to God for his Direction. There were four Faults committed. First, In putting the Ark into a Cart, which should have been carried by the Levites on their Shoulders. Secondly, The Levites were not permitted to touch the Ark, as Uzza did. Thirdly, He was no Levite, and therefore more grievously offended. (Numb. xvi. 28.) Lastly, He wanted Faith, that God would take Care of the Ark. This last David could not help: But the three first he might have prevented.

Ver. 14. *So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves, to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.]* From this Place, and some others, (as Josh. iii. 3.) Buxtorf truly infers, I think, that all the Tribe of Levi had a Right to carry the Ark, the Priests as well as others. But while they were in the Wilderness, they that were bare Levites commonly did it, because the Priests were few, and had other Employment. But the Priests being Levites might do it when they pleased, or were appointed to it. See Histor. Arcæ, cap. viii. sect. 2.

Ver. 15. *And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word*

word of the LORD.] The Children of *Kobath* had this peculiar Privilege: Who are the *Levites* here mentioned, *Numb. iv. 4.*

Ver. 16. *And David spake to the chief of the Levites.]* To those six Persons before mentioned, ver. 5, 6, &c.

To appoint their brethren to be singers with instruments of musick, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals.] They that were Chief among them, knew who could sing well, and play upon such Instruments as are here mentioned: The best of which were to be ordered to perform this Service.

Sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.] Singing so loud that all might hear, and have their Hearts lifted up with Joy in God. See 2 *Chron. xx. 19.* Here it may be observed, that tho' *David* did not build the Temple, yet he ordered how the Service of God should be performed there, in a more solemn Manner than it had been hitherto, with singing and musical Instruments. Which began now when the Ark was brought to the Place prepared for it; and was ordered afterwards to be constantly performed every Day, *ch. xvi. 4, 42.* And indeed there was scarce any solemn Service performed to their Gods, either by *Greeks* or *Barbarians*, without both Vocal and Instrumental Musick, as the illustrious *Ezekiel Spanhemius* hath observed out of *Strabo*, L. x. p. 467. See him upon *Callimachus* his Hymn to *Diana*, ver. 245. where he notes out of *Plutarch*, that their Musical Instruments were three (as they were here) and upon ver. 245. that Musick was thought to be a thing so heavenly, that their Gods were accounted the Inventors of the principal Instruments of it. See upon ver. 295. Certain it is that the *Greeks* were not the Inventors of them, but they had them out of the East, as he shews upon ver. 249. Which appears by the Names of some of them, which are plainly extant in the Bible, as *Bockartus* hath observed.

Ver. 17. *So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel: and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah: and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiab.]* These three were the Principal who were appointed to govern the rest.

Ver. 18. *And with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel.]* The LXX take *Ben* for an Appellative, and join it with the next, as if he had said, *Zechariah the Son of Jaaziel.* But the *Jews* take it for a proper Name of one of the Singers (as we do) and *David Kimchi* thinks this is the Person to whom *David* directed the *Ninth Psalm* to be sung by him, upon the Occasion of the Death of *Saul*; for it is said to be *Laben*, which he understands to be *to Ben* the Singer.

And Shemiramoth, and Jebiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Eliphaleb, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters.] This was the Office of these of the second Degree: Who were also, when their Attendance was over, instructed in Musick, and assisted in it when they were not in the other Employment.

Ver. 19. *So the singers, Hemen, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass.*

Ver. 20. *And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jebiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah.]* Here is no mention made of *Ben*; which some imagine is, because before they came to execute their Office, he fell sick, or died: And *Azaziah*, who was not mentioned before, came in his Room: But was not so eminent as he, and therefore put in the last Place.

With psalteries on Alamoth.] Or, with *Alamoth*. Which being joined with *Psalteries*, is thought by some to be a musical Instrument. But *Strigelius*, from the Derivation of the Word, thinks that *Alamoth* signifies that these Men sung the *Base*, as those in the next Verse did the *Treble*.

Ver. 21. *And Mattithiah, and Eliphaleb, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith.]* Some take *Sheminith* to signify an Harp with eight Strings.

To excel.] The Hebrew Word *Lenatzeach*, coming from *Natzach*, to overcome, is thought by *Strigelius* to signify a Voice higher than all the rest.

Ver. 22. *And Chenaniah chief of the Levites.]* A principal Person among them, but not before-mentioned: So that it doth not appear of what Family he was.

Was for song.] Or, as it is translated in the Margin, *was for Carriage*; that is, for managing of the Voice. He taught them how to sing, as the following Words tell us, *he instructed about the Song, because he was skilful.* Being a great Artist in singing, he was the *Præcentor*: For ver. 27. he is called *Master of the Song*. Which *Lud. Cappellus* thinks signifies as much, as that he guided them to keep time, by the Elevation of his Hand, or of a Wand. So the LXX. ἀρχων τῶν ᾠδῶν, who is properly called the *Præcentor* among us: Who among the ancient *Salii* was called *Vates*: He being the prime Singer while they were dancing; as *Gutberletius* observes in his Book *De Saliis*, cap. xi.

Ver. 23. *And Berechiah, and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark.]* Their Office at present was, to guard the Ark as it passed along, that none might touch it.

Ver. 24. *And Shebaniab, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God.]* For this was the Office of the Priests, as we read in *Numbers x.* the beginning.

And Obed-edom, and Jebiah were door-keepers for the ark.] When it was settled at *Jerusalem*, they kept the Door of the Tent prepared for it; that none might approach it but the High-Priest at proper Seasons.

Ver. 25. *So David and the elders of Israel, and the captains over hundreds, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, out of the house of Obed-edom with joy.]* With Musick and Dancing. See 2 *Sam. vi. 5, 12, 15.*

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.]* Some understand this of the Strength that God gave them to carry the Ark without fainting, tho' they went up a steep

steep Hill, to settle it in the Place, where it was to rest. But it is not likely, God imposed such great Burdens on them in his Service, that it was hard to bear them, without an extraordinary Assistance. I think the Meaning rather is, that he preserved them from committing any Error, so that they carried it without Offence. Or, as *Junius* takes it, God gave them Ease, and others were ordered to take their Place, when they had gone some Part of the Way. For, tho' it was not an heavy Burthen, yet they could not but proceed with Fear and Trembling, lest they should incur God's Displeasure, as *Uzzab* did. Then *they*, that is, the *Levites*, offered upon their own Account the Sacrifices here mentioned; besides those which the King offered, as we read 2 Sam. vi. 13. And seven Bulls, and as many Rams being offered, some think, that every time the Ark rested, for the *Levites* to rest themselves, a Bull was offered with a Ram: Which was seven times between the House of *Obed-edom*, and the City of *David*.

Ver. 27. *And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen.*] Pure white Garments were proper (as *Grotius* here notes) in Divine Ministrations. And *Kimchi* thinks, that the *Levites*, who bare the Ark, and the Singers, being thus clothed upon this solemn Occasion, *David* being Musical, and bearing his Part among them, chose to appear in the very same Habit. Just, saith he, as among Christians, their Kings and Princes, when they go in Procession with the Clergy, are clothed like them. And by this perhaps may be understood what *Michal* meant when she found fault with *David* for uncovering himself: Which does not signify, that he appeared naked, but put off his Royal Robes, and put on those that did not belong to him. But it must be confessed, that fine Linen was the Apparel of Kings, and great Men.

And all the Levites that bare the ark, and Chenaniah the master of the song, with the singers.] These were all clothed in fine Linen.

David also had upon him an ephod of linen.] Which was an honorary Vestment allowed to those who were not *Levites*, as I have shewn upon 1 Sam. ii. 18. See my Notes there, and upon 2 Sam. vi. 14.

Ver. 28. *Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.*] See upon 2 Sam. vi. 15.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart.*] And expressed as much, when he came to his House, in Words of great Contempt. See 2 Sam. vi. 16, 20. She was a proud Woman, and 'tis likely had no great Sense of Religion, which in the Reign of *Saul* (as we read before, xiii. 3.) was much neglected.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. **S**O they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that *Da-*

vid had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-sacrifices, and peace-offerings before God.

Ver. 2. *And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.*] The *Targum* translates it, in the name of the WORD of the LORD. Which shews that Interpreter took the WORD to be *Jehovah*.

Ver. 3. *And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and women, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.*] These three Verses have been explained upon 2 Sam. vi. 17, 18, 19. See there.

Ver. 4. *And he appointed certain of the Levites.*] In their Courses.

To minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank, and praise the LORD God of Israel.] To declare unto the People the wonderful Works God had done for *Israel* (for that is to record) and to give him Thanks, and to extol his Almighty Goodness, and all his glorious Perfections. As none could sacrifice but the *Priests* of the Seed of *Aaron*; so none could minister in the Temple but the *Levites*: Which was unalterably established by the Law of God. But it was in the Power of their King to assign the *Priests* or *Levites* several Functions in the Service of God, as *Grotius* observes from this Place. They were appointed to be Singers, with Instruments of Musick, by the Prophets, as we are told in 2 Chron. xxix. 25. and *David*, as a Prophet, not as a King, appointed this Divine Service, xxiii. 2. But the Application of Persons to their several Offices is every where ascribed to King *David*, and afterwards to *Solomon*; and *Jehoshaphat*, who was no Prophet, ordered the *Priests* and *Levites* to go and teach the People. So *David* here appointed who should sing, who should be Porters, and discharge other Duties. See *De Imper. sum. potest. circa sacra*, Cap. x. p. 270. Edit. Paris.

Ver. 5. *Asaph the chief.*] Some of whose Divine Compositions we have in the Book of *Psalms*.

And next to him Zechariah, Feiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jebiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Feiel, with psalteries, and with harps: but Asaph made a sound with cymbals.] By whom all the rest were directed to take their several Parts in this Service.

Ver. 6. *Benaiah also, and Jebaziel the priests, with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.*] At the Morning and Evening-Service these *Priests* attended with Trumpets, as the *Levites* did with other Musical Instruments.

Ver. 7. *Then on that day David delivered first this psalm.*] Or, as it may be plainly translated out of the Hebrew, *This David appointed* (or ordained) *in the first place at that time*; viz. that God should be praised by *Asaph* and his Collegues in the Manner following. Which solemn Service began on the Day when he brought up the Ark, and ever after was continued.

To thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.] To give him Thanks (as *Conradus Pellicanus* well glosses) for all his Benefits he had bestowed on his People *Israel*, and which he intended to bestow upon all the People of this World by his Son *Christ*.

Ver. 8.

Ver. 8. *Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.]* Out of Psalm xcvi. and cv. which, I suppose, David had made before this time, he now composed one Hymn to be daily used in the Divine Service: Wherein the Divine Perfections are admirably set forth, that the People might be excited to his Fear, Love, and Obedience. I have sufficiently explained the Sense of every Verse in my *Paraphrase upon the Psalms*: But shall here touch upon them again, out of that good, and truly great Man now mentioned, who thus glosses upon this Verse. O ye Ministers and Worshipers of the most High, celebrate with Heart and Voice all the Benefits you have received from him the Fountain of all Good; and if you suffer any Evil, or want any Thing, pray to him for Relief; and being taught by happy Experience how good he is, proclaim it to all the World, and teach them, that all Things depend upon his Pleasure and Order.

Ver. 9. *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk you of all his wondrous works.]* Praise him with Heart and Voice: Declare his wonderful Works, wherein he hath testified his Omnipotence, and his Wisdom to be faithful.

Ver. 10. *Glory ye in his holy name, let the heart of them rejoyce that seek the LORD.]* Look upon this as your highest Happiness, and make your Boast of it, that he is your God: And let their Heart rejoyce who seek his Favour as their chiefest Good.

Ver. 11. *Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.]* Being sensible of your own Weakness, depend upon his power for help: And seek his Clemency and Mercy with humble Prayer on all Occasions. The Ark is called *God's Strength* in other Places, 2 Chron. vi. 41. Psalm lxxviii. 61. and therefore here they are exhorted to fall down before it and implore his Mercy.

Ver. 12. *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done.]* For the Preservation of his People, and the Punishment of their Enemies.

His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.] He would have them reflect upon the Plagues of Egypt, which came upon them in a wonderful Manner, at the Command of Moses. Or perhaps, he means by *Judgments* the Laws he gave them at Mount Sinai, Exod. xxi. 1.

Ver. 13. *O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones.]* This is your Duty, as you are the Off-spring of a most faithful Servant of his: O ye Posterity of Jacob, whom God hath chosen for his People; not for your Merits, but out of his free Love to one that loved him.

Ver. 14. *He is the LORD our God, his judgments are in all the earth.]* The great LORD of all Things, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is our God: Who rules the whole World by his Providence.

Ver. 15. *Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word that he commanded to a thousand generations.]* Never forget his most gracious Covenant, wherein he promises to be ever propitious to you, if you keep his Law.

Ver. 16. *Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac.]* This

Covenant he made with your Fathers, and confirmed it with an Oath, that it should never fail.

Ver. 17. *And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.]* And what he first promised to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac by a solemn Oath, he establish'd to Jacob by an inviolable Law, to endure for ever. See Gen. xvii. 1, 2. xxii. 16, &c. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13.

Ver. 18. *Saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the land of your inheritance.]* He gave him an undoubted Title to that good Land; and afterward put his Posterity into actual Possession of it.

Ver. 19. *When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.]* Remember your former Condition, when you were the smallest of all Nations, poor and little esteemed; were Strangers in the Land, which now you enjoy.

Ver. 20. *And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people.]* When you wandred up and down, from one Country to another: Having no settled Dwelling-place.

Ver. 21. *He suffered no man to do them wrong.]* Tho' they were in Danger to be oppressed by those who had not the Fear of God before their Eyes, yet they were safe every where under the divine Protection.

Yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes.] When great Princes did but attempt to offer any Violence to them, he presently made them feel his Hand against them.

In *Seder Olam Rabba* they say, that thus far they sung in the Morning.

Ver. 22. *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.]* So that they durst not so much as touch them, but used them as if they had been Kings and Lords of the Land. So precious were you in his Eyes, as if to do them the least harm had been the Crime of Treason against the Divine Majesty.

Grotius thinks, they are called God's anointed, because they had in their Family, *Jus Regium*; and therefore Nicolaus Damascenus and Justin call them Kings. Kimchi more plainly translates the Word anointed, *My great Men, or Princes*: For Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were honoured by Kings, Abimelech and Pharaoh, as if they had been anointed Kings. Whence the Children of Heth say to Abraham, thou art a Prince of God, that is, a great Prince, in the midst of us, Gen. xxiii. 6. St Hierom thinks, that all the Israelites when they came out of Egypt, were called God's anointed, because they were under his special Protection, by the Cloud that covered them, as Cyrus was called his anointed, because he was chosen by him to a special Office, to be the Deliverer of his People, and restore them to their own Land.

Ver. 23. *Sing unto the LORD all the earth: shew forth from day to day his salvation.]* Let not only the Israelites praise him, but all the People of the Earth acknowledge their great Creator; proclaim his promised Salvation by Christ, without Intermission.

Here began the Song between the two Evenings (if we may believe the Jews in *Seder Olam Rabba*) unto those Words, ver. 36. *Let all the People say Amen.*

Ver. 24.

Ver. 24. *Declare his glory among the heathen : his marvellous works among all nations.]* Let them spread his Fame among all Nations, and celebrate every where his astonishing Works.

Ver. 25. *For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised : he also is to be feared above all gods.]* He is the great Creator of all Things, and the Donor of all Good, who therefore cannot be sufficiently magnified and praised : And none ought to share with him in his Worship and Service.

Ver. 26. *For all the gods of the people are idols : but the LORD made the heavens.]* For all the Gods which the Heathen worship, are empty Names, who can do nothing : It is the LORD God of *Israel*, who made the Sun, Moon, and Stars, (which the *Gentiles* worship) who therefore only is to be adored.

Ver. 27. *Glory and honour are in his presence, strength and gladness are in his place.]* To him only we ought to ascribe Glory, Honour, and Power : In him alone we ought to confide, to him we ought to cleave, and in his Clemency and Favour perpetually rejoyce.

Ver. 28. *Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.]* Let not his Worship be confined to the People of *Israel*, but let all sorts of People, from one End of the World to the other, acknowledge him to be the Great GOD, who governs the whole World.

Ver. 29. *Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name : bring an offering, and come before him, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.]* Acknowledge all his glorious Attributes, wherein he excels all Beings : Offer unto him the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving ; prostrate yourselves before him in the humblest Manner, and adore his most holy and gracious Majesty.

Ver. 30. *Fear before him all the earth.]* Let all the Inhabitants of the Earth tremble before him, and humble themselves unto him.

The world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.] For if they humbly submit themselves to his Gospel, and implore his Grace, he will amend the World, and confirm them in all that is good ; and not suffer so many Nations to wander in such Labyrinths of Error.

Ver. 31. *Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoyce : and let men say among the nations, the LORD reigneth.]* Let all the Inhabitants in Heaven and Earth be glad and rejoyce : For the Lord will not only be known in *Judæa*, but most gloriously reign in all Nations.

Ver. 32. *Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.]* By the fulness of it, is meant its swelling to the very Top of the Banks, as *Bochartus* observes.

Let the Fields rejoyce, and all that is therein.

Ver. 33. *Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth.]* These two Verses he thus paraphrases, Let the vast Sea, and all that live in the Waters triumph ; let the dry Land and all living Creatures therein exult for Joy : Let the Trees and all the Fruit that grows on them, sing to the Lord for his Benefits. For the Creator of all comes to restore Mankind, and resume them into his Favour ; for whom

all these Things acknowledge they were created.

Ver. 34. *O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good : for his mercy endureth for ever.]* Whatsoever we are or can do, we owe it to his Divine Bounty : Unto whom we ought to give perpetual Thanks, and hope in his Mercy for ever.

Ver. 35. *And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.]* Let all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* say, Save us, O LORD our God, most Just, Merciful, and Powerful : and gather those who now are distant from, and opposite to one another, by Variance and Hatred, into the Unity of Faith and Charity : That all Nations may unanimously give Thanks unto thee, and glory in this, that they are always praising thee.

Some have imagined, that *Ezra* added these Words after they came out of Captivity : But *David* rather uttered them by the Spirit of Prophecy, concerning the happy Union of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Ver. 36. *Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever.]* Unto the great Creator and Sovereign of the World, God most blessed for ever, let all Men every where never cease to give Blessing and Praise.

And all the people said Amen, and praised the LORD.] At the End of this Hymn (the two last Verses of which are the Conclusion of *Psalms* cvi. 47, 48.) all the people expressed their Desire that God might be for ever praised in this manner, by saying, *Amen*. From whence *Vitranga* observes the great Antiquity of this sacred Rite, of saying *Amen* at the Conclusion of all our Prayers, and Benedictions. Which was continued after the Captivity, as we find *Nehem.* viii. 6. And he notes there Rules which the *Jewish* Doctors give concerning the Pronunciation of this Word, by the People, *First*, That it be not pronounced too hastily and swiftly, but with a grave and distinct Voice. And then not louder than the Tone of him that blessed. And lastly, It was to be expressed in Faith : With a certain Persuasion, that God would bless them and hear their Prayers. *De Synag. Veteri*, Lib. iii. Par. ii Cap. 18.

Ver. 37. *So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph and his brethren to minister before the ark continually, as every days work required.]* To sing Hymns proper to the Season.

Ver. 38. *And Obed-edom, with their brethren threescore and eight.]* He was one of the principal Singers under *Asaph*, ver. 5.

Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun, and Hosab to be porters.] This is another *Obed-edom* : Who is joined with *Jehiab*, as Door-keeper for the Ark, xv. 24. But *Jehiab*, I suppose, was also called *Hosab*.

Ver. 39. *And Zadok the priest.]* He was the second Priest, as I have often noted, Deputy to the High-Priest.

And his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD, in the high places that was in Gibeon.] As *Asaph* and his Brethren ministered at *Jerusalem* : So others were appointed to minister

fter a *Gibeon* : Where the Tabernacle of *Moses* was, and the Altar of Burnt-offering, ever since the Slaughter of the Priests by *Saul*. See 2 *Chron.* i. 3. Here the ordinary Worship of God was performed, and therefore the Priests attended at this Place to offer Sacrifice, which the *Levites* could not do, *ver.* 40. But the extraordinary Worship was where the Ark was placed, at *Jerusalem* ; where *Abiathar* the High-Priest attended upon *David* : That if he had any Occasion to consult the Divine Majesty, (which could be done only before the Ark) he might be ready to do it for him. But *Zadok*, the Chief of the Secondary Priests, always attended at *Gibeon*.

Ver. 40. *To offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel.*] For this Part of the Divine Service could be performed no where but there where the Altar was, nor by any body but by the Priests : And therefore *David* took care it should be constantly performed here, tho' he was not present every Day at those Sacrifices, which were offered for all the People of *Israel*, wheresoever they were. The Priests also took care to trim the Lamps, and set the Shew-bread on the Table, and to do all other things which the Law required.

Ver. 41. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever.*] As *Asaph* and his Brethren took care of the Musick at *Jerusalem*, where no Sacrifices were offered, but only Hymns sung, and Prayers made : So did *Heman* and *Jeduthun* (who were with *Zadok*) at *Gibeon*, where they sung and played on Instruments when the Morning and Evening Sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 42. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals.*] It should be translated, *with them (Heman and Jeduthun) there were trumpets and cymbals.*

For those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God.] All the Utensils of the Tabernacle and Temple were sacred and set apart for that Use : Not only those of the Altar, but even these Instruments of Musick, which *David* ordained to praise the Lord withal. They were not common, but consecrated to God to be used in his Service alone : And therefore called *musical instruments of God*, both here and in 2 *Chron.* vii. 6. that is, sacred ones : Whence those that sung the Song of Victory over the Beast, *Revel.* xv. 2. are said to have in their Hands *the harps of God* : That is, not profane or common, but sacred Harps, the Harps of the Temple, for there they sung their Anthem, as *Mr Mede* observes, *Book i. Discourse 2.*

And the sons of Jeduthun were porters.] To the Tabernacle, as others of them were to the Ark, *ver.* 38.

Ver. 43. *And all the people departed every man to his house : and David returned to bless his house.*] See 2 *Sam.* vi. 19, 20.

C H A P. XVII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW it came to pass as *David* sat in his house, that *David* said to *Nathan* the prophet, *Lo, I dwell in an House of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD remaineth under curtains.*

Ver. 2. *Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart, for God is with thee.*

Ver. 3. *And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,*

Ver. 4. *Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in.*] These four Verses have been explained before, 2 *Sam.* vii. in the five first Verses.

Ver. 5. *For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel, unto this day, but I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.*] This Verse is the very same with the sixth Verse of that Chapter in *Samuel* : Only there it is said, *I have walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle* ; and here, *I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.*] Both which signify, that he had no settled Place wherein to dwell, but walked or went, where the Tent, or Tabernacle, was pitched for him. For the Words may be translated, *I went out of the tent into the tent* : That is, when they marched in the Wilderness, the Ark was taken out of the Tent, and when they rested it was put into the Tent again : And not into a House built of Cedar. Or, this may refer to the Translation of the Ark from the Tabernacle by *Moses*, unto the Tent made for it by *David*.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, (whom I commanded to feed my people) saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars ?*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 7.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel.*

Ver. 8. *And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.*

Ver. 9. *Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more ; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more : (as at the beginning)*] He speaks here, as if now, and not before, they were possessed of the Land of *Canaan* : For under *David's* Government they were settled and flourished ; whereas under the Judges they had no rest.

Ver. 10. *And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel :*) moreover, *I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the LORD will build thee an house.*

Ver. 11. *And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons, and I will establish his kingdom.*

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Ver. 12.

Ver. 12. *He shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever.*

Ver. 13. *I will be his father, and he shall be my son, and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee.*] All these Verses, which are set down almost in the same Words, in 2 Sam. vii. from ver. 7. to ver. 16. are there explained.

Ver. 14. *But I will settle him in mine house, and in my Kingdom for ever, and his throne shall be established for evermore.*] That is, in my Church, which is the House of God, wherein he dwelt; and which he governed, ruled, and protected as his peculiar People. It is very observable, that in 2 Sam. vii. 16. speaking to David, he calls them, *thine house, and thy Kingdom*: But here, *mine house, and my kingdom*. Which confirms, what I noted upon the former Place, that this principally belongs to the Messiah, of whom David was but a Figure.

Ver. 15. *According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.*] See there, 2 Sam. vii. 17.

Ver. 16. *And David the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?*] He came and took his Place before the Ark, and then stood up, and made the following Prayer to God, as I have explained it 2 Sam. vii. 18.

Ver. 17. *And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God, for thou hast also spoken of thy servants house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.*] This is likewise explained there, ver. 19. but the latter Part of that Verse is expressed in different Words, for there he saith, *Is this the manner of men, O LORD*, but here, *thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high Degree, O LORD God*. This was not after the manner of Men, to treat a poor Shepherd, as if he were a great Prince: But so he had dealt with David. But *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks, the Hebrew Words will bear this Translation, which in his Opinion is better than our own, *Thou hast looked upon me in the form of a man, who art in the highest the LORD God*. Which he looks upon as a Prophecy of the Messiah, who was really the LORD God, but appeared in the Form of a Man. The LXX come near this Sense in the former Part of the Words, ἐπεὶ δὲ με ὡς ὁμοῖος ἀνθρώπου, *Thou hast look'd upon me, as the aspect of man*. So *Christophorus Helvicus* interprets it in his *Elenchus Judæorum*.

Ver. 18. *What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant.*] He could desire no more for the Increase of his Honour: Which is an Explication of what is said 2 Sam. vii. 20. See there.

Ver. 19. *O LORD, for thy servants sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things.*] In 2 Sam. vii. 21. it is said *for thy Word's sake*, that is, for the sake of thy promise to thy Servant, as this Place explains it. He had passed his Word to David by his Prophets out of his own mere Goodness, without any other Motive. See there. It may be also thought to signify, *for the sake of the Messiah, who is the*

Word of God: And by Way of Eminence is called *his servant*, *Isaiah* xlii. 1. xlix. 5.

Ver. 20. *O LORD, there is none like thee neither is there any God, besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.*] This is more fully expressed in 2 Sam. vii. 22.

Ver. 21. *And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?*] See 2 Sam. vii. 23. As in the former Verse he acknowledges his Happiness, in being beloved of God; so in this, the great Honour God had done him, in making him King of such a People.

Ver. 22. *For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever, and thou, LORD, becamest their God.*] See there, Verse 24.

Ver. 23. *Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.*] See ver. 25.

Ver. 24. *Let it ever be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, the LORD of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.*] See ver. 20. where the same Thing is said, only the Title of God is a little here enlarged. For there it is only said, *The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel*; but here, *The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel, ever a God to Israel*. Or, as it may be translated, *The LORD of hosts the God of Israel, is a God to Israel*, that is, most Gracious and Merciful, as appeared in many Things, particularly in bestowing such a King upon them.

Ver. 25. *For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant, that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.*] See there, ver. 17.

Ver. 26. *And now, LORD, thou art God, (and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant.)*] See ver. 28.

Ver. 27. *Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed for ever.*] this is delivered a little more largely in 2 Sam. vii. 29. See there.

C H A P. XVIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.] This Chapter hath been fully explained in 2 Sam. viii. What Differences there are in any Expression, is there noted, and an Account given of them, to which I refer the Reader. Only it may be observed upon this Verse, that in the Book of Samuel it is said, he took *Metheg-ammah* out of their Hand; but here *Gath and her Towns*: Which are all one in *Abbarbinel's* Account, who takes *Metheg-ammah* for a Region or Province, which comprehended *Gath* and her Towns. We may observe also in ver. 11. the great Piety of David, who had in his Heart to build a splendid House for God's Habitation: And when he was prohibited by God to do it (because he had been engaged in so many Wars, and

and shed a great deal of Blood) he could not satisfy himself without doing something towards it: By preparing Materials for it, and consecrating a great deal of Treasure to be employed in the Building, and no other Use. For that's the Meaning of what is here said, *that he dedicated unto the LORD the gold and silver* which he brought from several Nations: That is, he consecrated, or solemnly deputed them to this holy Use, that it might not be lawful hereafter to employ them to any other.

Ver. 16. It is observed by *Drusus*, that there were two *Abimelechs*; one the Grand-son of *Abitub*, the other the Son of *Abiathar*: Who by the Change of a Letter is here called *Abimelech*. *Miscel. Cent. I. cap. 46.*

CHAP. XIX.

THIS Chapter also hath been so fully explained in 2 Sam. x. that there is no need of adding any thing. Unless I observe, that the Country which there is called simply *Maacab*, is here called ver. 6. *Aram-maacab*. Which is the Foundation of their Opinion who think this was in Syria, as I there observed. But it is plain the Scripture makes *Maacab* a City of Canaan, Deut. iii. 14. *Joshua* xii. 4, 5. and other Places. But it lying beyond Jordan on the Borders of Syria, it had the Name of *Aram* added to it: Because the People were in their Manners more Syrians than Canaanites, as *Bochartus* conjectures. In like manner, *Aram Beth-rehob* he thinks belonged to Canaan, in the North Part of it, not far from *Emath*, that is, *Epiphania*. See *Numb.* xiii. 41. And *Maacab* was in the Tribe of *Manassch*, as *Rehob* in the Tribe of *Asher*, *Josh.* xiii. 11. xix. 28. As for what is said here, that *they hired thirty two thousand chariots*, the meaning must be, so many Men, who fought in Chariots, when they saw Cause. For in the Book of *Samuel*, it is said expressly that they hired twenty thousand Footmen from *Zoba*, and twelve thousand Men of *Ashtob*: Which make up the thirty two thousand here mentioned. Which if it should be understood of such a Number of Chariots, there would have been no Footmen in their whole Army, which is incredible: As it is that they should have so many Chariots. See 1 Sam. xiii. 5.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, *Joab* led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged *Rabbah*, (but David tarried at Jerusalem) and *Joab* smote *Rabbah* and destroyed it.] See 2 Sam. xi. 1. where the History of David's Adultery with *Bathsheba*, and the Murder of *Uriah* follows: Which is here omitted, it being there so largely related, that nothing could be added to it.

Ver. 2. And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it, and it was set upon Davids head; and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.

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Ver. 3. And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes: even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.] See 2 Sam. xii. 30, 31. where these two Verses are explained.

Ver. 4. And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time *Sibbechai* the Hushathite slew *Sippai* that was of the children of the giant, and they were subdued.] An Account is given of this in 2 Sam. xxi. 11. where this Giant is called *Saph*; who was, as I observe there, of the Race of the *Anakims*. See Deut. ix. 2.

Ver. 5. And there was war again with the Philistines, and *Elhanan* the son of *Jair* slew *Iabni* the brother of *Goliath* the Gittite, whose spears staff was like a weavers beam.] See there, 2 Sam. xxi. 19.

Ver. 6. And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was the son of the giant.

Ver. 7. But when he defied Israel, *Jonathan* the son of *Shimea*, Davids brother, slew him.

Ver. 8. These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.] These three Verses are explained in the fore-named Place, 2 Sam. xxi. 20, 21, 22. After which follows the Hymn which David composed in Commemoration of his many Deliverances from these and other Enemies, especially from *Saul*: Which is here omitted, because not only there largely recorded, but also in the Book of *Psalms*.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.] It is said in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. that God being angry with Israel, moved David: That is, suffered Satan to move him. This is sufficiently explained there: Only here the Phrase *stood up* is to be observed. Which was the Posture of those who charged and accused any Person of a Crime, in a Court of Justice. See 1 Kings xxii. 21. Thus Satan is represented as the Accuser of the Brethren, in the Book of the Revelation: And here to lay some Sin to the Charge of the Israelites, which he represented to God as a Reason to punish them: For it is the way of the Holy Scripture thus to bring down these Things, and accommodate them to the lowest Capacities.

Ver. 2. And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people.] Who, it is plain by 2 Sam. xxiv. 4. were with Joab when the King gave this Command.

Go, number Israel from Beersheba even unto Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

Ver. 3. And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many as they be: but my lord the king, are they not all my lords servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?] See what I have noted upon 2 Sam.

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xxiv. 3.

xxiv. 3. It is something strange that *Joab* should see the Danger of this, and *David* not think of it; no not when it was so plainly represented to him. But the best Men are sometimes very drowsy, and apprehend not those Things which plainly appear to those who are not so good.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless, the kings word prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went thro' all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.*] Unto which they came at the End of nine Months and twenty Days, as is more largely related in 2 Sam. xxiv. from ver. 4. to ver. 9.

Ver. 5. *And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah were four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.*] This Account of their Number differs much from that given in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. concerning which see what I have there noted.

Ver. 6. *But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them.*] Some think he took no Account of *Levi* because they were not Warriors, and such only as were fit for War, *David* desired to be satisfied how many they were. And *Benjamin* they think was so diminished in the Time of the Judges, that they were to be spared. But these, it were easy to shew, are not good Reasons; and no other Reason is to be sought for, than that given here in the very next Words.

For the kings word was abominable to Joab.] He did all this against his Will, and at last the Work was so odious to him, that he was quite tired with it: And therefore broke off before he took the Number of these two Tribes.

Ver. 7. *And God was displeased with this thing, therefore he smote Israel.*] He resolved to punish them, because it was for their Sins that God permitted *David* to indulge himself in this Vanity.

Ver. 8. *And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the Iniquity of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly.*] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. where I have explained this, and given the best Account I could of the Nature of this Sin.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD spake unto Gad, Davids seer, saying.*] This is expressed a little more largely in 2 Sam. xxiv. 11. See there.

Ver. 10. *Go and tell David saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things, chuse thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] He speaks to him so solemnly in the Name of the LORD, that he might attend the more seriously to what he said, and look upon it as peremptorily resolved.

Ver. 11. *So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, chuse thee*

Ver. 12. *Either three years famine, or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, (while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee) or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel: now therefore advise thy self, what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.*] In the Book of Samuel it is said, the Prophet pro-

pounded seven Years of Famine, and here but three. Of which Difference I have given an Account upon 2 Sam. xxiv. 13.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD, (for very great are his mercies) but let me not fall into the hand of man.*] See there upon ver. 14. I only add here, that the Pestilence is more properly called the Hand of the LORD, than other common Calamities: For they have visible Causes, but none know whence this sudden Destruction comes, but immediately from the Hand of God; when there is no Alteration that we can see in the Air, or other Elements (as we call them). And therefore the Angel of the LORD is said to have smote the Army of *Sennacherib*, with such a Pestilence, as *Josephus* reasonably conjectures.

Ver. 14. *So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.*] This is more largely expressed in 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. See my Annotations there.

Ver. 15. *And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld.*] This seems to import that there were more Angels than one employed to destroy in several Places of the Country: And that the Angel sent to *Jerusalem* had begun to slay some of the Inhabitants: But God took pity of them; beholding, perhaps, their serious Repentance.

And he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] See there upon ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *And David lift up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand.*] Whence the Pestilence is called, ver. 12. the sword of the LORD.

Stretched out over Jerusalem.] As ready to do Execution upon the People there.

Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.] It appears by their Habit, that they (and the People of *Jerusalem* with them, ver. 15.) were humbling themselves before God for their Sins, and deprecating his Displeasure: For Mourners were wont to clothe themselves in Sackcloth.

Ver. 17. *And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbred? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my fathers house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.*] See 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.

Ver. 18. *Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David.*] This seems to signify that *Gad* was sent upon his former Message (ver. 9.) by an Angel, who came with that Command from God.

That David should go and set up an altar unto the LORD, in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] See there, ver. 18.

Ver. 19. *And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of LORD.*] See there, ver. 19.

Ver. 20.

Ver. 20. *And Ornan turned back; and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves.]* Or, when he saw the Angel, he turned his Face from him; (as did his four Sons, who likewise saw him) being afraid at so glorious an Appearance.

This Book, as I observed in the beginning, supplies some Things omitted in the Book of Samuel, among which this is one. For nothing is said there of Araunab's seeing the Angel, but only of David's seeing him.

Now Ornan was threshing wheat.] For the greatest Persons did not, in those Days, disdain such Employments.

Ver. 21. *And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.]* See 2 Sam. xxiv. 20.

Ver. 22. *Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD.]* This he said, after Ornan had first desired, to know the Cause of his coming to him.

Thou shalt grant it me for the full price, that the plague may be stayed from the people.] By offering a Sacrifice to appease the Divine Anger. See ver. 21.

Ver. 23. *And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt-offerings, and the threshing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering, I give it all.]* He offered the Ground to the King, as a free Gift; with every thing that was necessary for Sacrifice. See 2 Sam. xxiv. 22, 23.

Ver. 24. *And king David said to Ornan, Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.*

Ver. 25. *So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.]* This confutes their Opinion, who think there were no Shekels but of Silver. See 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. where I have shewn, that this Account of the Sum of Money which he paid, doth not disagree with that which is given there in that Place.

Ver. 26. *And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings.* See there, ver. 25.

And called upon the LORD.] By Thanksgivings for his Mercy, beseeching the Continuance of it.

And he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.] This was the highest Token of God's gracious Acceptance of any Sacrifice. See Lev. ix. 24. The Jews say thus God consumed the Sacrifices of Abel, and of Noah, and of Abraham, when they first dedicated Altars to him. It is certain from the Holy Scriptures, thus God testified his Acceptance of the Sacrifices of Gibeon and Elijah in ancient Times. Which Julian himself had not the Hardiness to deny. See St Cyril, *contra Julianum*, L. x. And indeed this was known by the Heathen: For Servius upon Virg. *Æneid*. xii. ver. 200. saith, that in the old Temples Sacrifices were no other ways consumed, *quam igne divino precibus impetrato*, than by Divine

Fire obtained by Prayers. See other Testimonies out of Heathen Antiquity, in Huetius his *Quæst. Alnetanæ*, p. 216, &c.

Ver. 27. *And the LORD commanded the Angel, and he put up his sword into the sheath thereof.]* Which it seems was brandished over Jerusalem, till this Sacrifice was offered.

Ver. 28. *At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.]* That is, he continued to offer his Sacrifices in that Place, where there was such a manifest Appearance of God, and a Testimony of his Acceptance of his Sacrifices. So that from this time he did not go to Gibeon, where Sacrifices were wont to be offered upon the brazen Altar. Which, as it follows, was then there, together with the Table, the Candlestick, and the Fire that came down from Heaven in the Days of Moses (as Seder Olam Rabba saith cap. xiv.) And here Zadok and his Brethren ministred, while the ark was in Zion, and with them Heman and others, xvi. 29, 40, 41.

Ver. 29. *For the tabernacle of the LORD which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that time in the high place at Gibeon.]* The Targum calls this high Place, the Sanctuary in Gibeon: For this Word comprehended the whole sacred House, as in 1 Sam. ix. 13.

Ver. 30. *But David could not go before it to enquire of God.]* He thought it not fit to go thither at this Time, tho' that was the Place to which they alway resorted to beg Mercy of God by Sacrifice.

For he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.] As he thought God had consecrated this Place for his Service, and that he ought immediately to sacrifice here, and not stay till he could go to Gibeon: So perhaps he thought there might still be Danger, that the Angel might smite Jerusalem, if he did not continue to worship God here. Where he knew, by some means or other, God intended his Temple should be built for his perpetual Honour in this Place. The Altar also now erected here, was set up by the Command of God, as well as that of Moses: So that he thought he might most acceptably serve God here.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN David said, *this is the house of the LORD God.]* He seems to have been inspired by God with this Thought, that here he would have his Temple to be built. At least, he concluded this, because the Angel had him build an Altar here, which was for Sacrifice: And here God testified his Presence, as he did at the Erection of the first Altar, Lev. ix. 24. He seems to have respect to the Words of Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.

And this is the altar of burnt-offering for Israel.] That is, here all their Sacrifices shall be offered, when the Temple is built. From which Words Maimonides concludes, it was utterly unlawful to build God an house any where else, or to offer Sacrifice in any other Place but this.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel.*] That is, those they called *Profelytes*, who perhaps were better skilled in such Works, as here follow, than the Children of *Israel*. Or, as *R. Solomon Jarchi* thinks, these being servile Works, he would not employ the free People of *Israel* therein: Which Example *Solomon* afterward followed, *1 Kings* v. 15. ix. 22. *2 Chron.* ii. 1. viii. 7. But we must not from hence infer, as some have done, that *Profelytes* were not as free as other Subjects: For they did not settle among the *Jews* upon any Condition, of being under any kind of Servitude.

And he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.] Tho' God had forbidden him to build him an House, yet he thought he might prepare Materials for the Building: Which God so much approved, that he was pleased to shew him a Model of such an House as he would have, as we read *ch.* xxviii. 19.

Ver. 3. *And David prepared iron in abundance, for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight.*] The Word which we translate *joinings*, the *Targum* translates *hinges*.

Ver. 4. *Also cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.*] There being great Friendship between them and *David*.

Ver. 5. *And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD, must be exceeding magnificent, of fame, and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.*] He considered with himself these two things, the Youth of *Solomon* (of which see *1 Kings* iii. 7.) and then the Magnificence of the Structure that was to be built; both which he thought required his Care, to make what Preparation he could for such an Undertaking. For young Men are wont to be careless, and rarely capable of great Designs. Learned Men have observed, that this Temple was so stately and rich, that it exceeded all others in the World: The famous Temple of *Diana* at *Ephesus*, being not to be compared with it. See *Dr Spencer*, L. iii. de Leg. Hebr. cap. 2. Dissert. 6.

Ver. 6. *Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an altar for the LORD God of Israel.*] By this it was apparent, and, I suppose, well known, that he intended him for his Successor: Which made the Crime of *Adonijah* the greater, who endeavoured to put him by.

Ver. 7. *And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God.*] See in *2 Sam.* vii 1, 2.

Ver. 8. *But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.*] This Reason is not mentioned in the Book of *Samuel*, but here is recorded to shew, that tho' *David's* Wars were warranted, and succeeded by

God, in an extraordinary Manner, yet it did not suit so well with the Divine Majesty, to have an House built him by one who had shed so much blood, as by one that reigned in Peace and Quietness. That he might be an Emblem of the King of peace, the LORD of the Church, who was prefigured in all such great Transactions. There may be respect also here, to the Blood of *Uriah*, and those worthy Men slain together with him, by the Contrivance of *David*: Which made him unworthy to be honoured with such an Undertaking as this. *David* himself takes Notice of this Blood-guiltiness, as a Thing which was always in God's Eye, *Psal.* li. 4. where he saith, *I have done this evil in thy sight*: As God here saith, *thou hast shed blood in my sight*. See more below, *chap.* xxviii. 3.

Ver. 9. *Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.*] Here are two Reasons, why his Son should have this Honour: Because God would give him Rest from all his Enemies, and *Israel* should live in Peace and Quietness in his Days. Which made his Reign a proper Season for this great Work.

Ver. 10. *He shall build an house for my name, and he shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.*] This can belong to none in the proper and full Sense of the Word, but *Christ* alone. For *Solomon* reigned but forty Years, and after that his Kingdom was torn in Pieces. Therefore to *Christ* the Author to the *Hebrews* applies them, *Hebr.* i. 5.

Ver. 11. *Now, my son, the LORD be with thee, and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.*] He would not have him doubt, but be as confident as he was, that God would prosper him in this Work; because he ordered him to undertake it.

Ver. 12. *Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.*] When he committed *Israel* to his Care.

Ver. 13. *Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage, dread not, nor be dismayed.*] Nothing gives a man such an undaunted Courage, as a Conscience of well doing, in exact Obedience to God's Commands.

Ver. 14. *Now behold, in my trouble,*] In a tumultuous Reign, full of various Troubles,

I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight (for it is in abundance:) timber also and stone have I prepared, and thou mayest add thereto.] His Heart was so bent to shew his Gratitude to God, that he would have done a great Deal more for him, if he had been able. Tho' this was such a vast Treasure which he amassed (not out of Covetousness, but purely for the Honour and Service of

of God) that it hath seemed to some incredible. For if we take this to be meant of the greater Talent, it makes such an immense Sum, that it exceeds the Riches of any of the *Roman* Emperors, or other former Monarchs. For in the Time of *Trajan*, when that Empire was largest, the Money that was in his Treasury, did not exceed seventy three thousand Talents, as *Bodinus* observes in his *Book de Republ.* L. vi. cap. 2. But a better Man than he, our *Brerewood*, hath computed these Talents to make so many Millions, that he thinks the Word *Kikkar* should not be translated *Talent* in this Place; but only a *Mass*, or *Cake* of Gold and Silver. And so *Guil. Budæus* observes in his *Book de Affe*, that there was in *Homer's* Time a Talent of lesser Value: For he speaks of two Talents, which were given, with other Things, as a Reward of a Victory obtained in some Exercises. Such Talents, he thinks, we are to understand in this place: For *David* reigned about the Time of the Kingdom of the *Assyrians*, which was near the Time of *Homer*. See *Beckius* upon the *Targum* in this Place. Of the same Opinion is *Jacobus Capellus*, and *Junius* and *Tremellius*, as appears by the Sum to which they make these Talents to amount, viz. five hundred thousand Dollars of Gold, and as much of Silver. And more lately *Hermannus Witsius* hath computed, that half so many Talents of the Sanctuary (as some call them) amounts to twenty thousand five hundred eighty five Tuns of Gold. Which he shews *David* had Opportunity to heap together, in his *Miscell. Sacra*, Tom. 2. Exerc. x. Sect. 17, 18.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.*] Who were all to be paid, as well as the Labourers, and Carriers of Burdens, out of this Money: Which required a very great Sum.

Ver. 16. *Of the gold, the silver, and the brass and the iron, there is no number.*] The Meaning is, the Quantity of Brass and Iron was not numbred, as that of the Gold and Silver was.

Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.] He would not have him now go about the Work, but begin it when he was settled on his Throne: Nothing doubting the Lord would prosper it.

Ver. 17. *David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying.*] By advising him, and encouraging the People in their Labours.

Ver. 18. *Is not the LORD your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side?*] What God hath already done for them, was a Ground of Hope he would further them in this Work; which was for his Service.

For he hath given the Inhabitants of the land into mine hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and before his people.] For God was the Author of all those Wars, and gave them all their Victories.

Ver. 19. *Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God, arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD your God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be*

built to the name of the LORD.] He beseeches them not to neglect this Opportunity, which he spake of in the foregoing Verse, viz. the Time of Peace which God had given them; which was fit for such a Work. *Strigelius* compares these Words with those of Christ, *while ye have the Light, walk in the Light*. And indeed the Ark and the Tabernacle had been too long separated, and therefore such Preparation, being made for it, it was time to bring the Ark with all the holy Vessels, in the Tabernacle, together into a settled Place, by building the Sanctuary for them.

C H A P. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *SO when David was old, and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.*] Declared him his Successor, but did not resign his Throne to him, nor make him his Coadjutor.

Ver. 2. *And he gathered together all the princes of Israel with the priests and the Levites.*] It is likely he took this Opportunity to declare before them all, that *Solomon* should be King after his Decease. But the principal End of this Assembly was, that he might acquaint them with a new Regulation of the *Priests* and *Levites* in their Ministration: Which he intended to establish by a Divine Direction, as we read xxviii. 12, 13. This was a Work becoming his elder Years, after he had long observed and weighed the Inconveniencies of their present Method, and the Necessity of putting Things into a better Order. For nothing is more useful or more beautiful than good Order, as *Strigelius* observes out of *Xenophon* in his *Oeconomics*. And therefore the Church of God was highly obliged to *David*, for distinguishing the Degrees and Offices of the *Levites*: Appointing some to take Care of the Divine Rites and Ceremonies (as his Words are); others to govern the publick Judgments; others to watch and guard the Temple; others to celebrate the Praises of God with Singing and Instruments of Musick.

Ver. 3. *Now the Levites were numbred from the age of thirty years and upward.*] So *Moses* appointed, *Numb.* iv. 3. for then they were come to their full Strength, and fit for Service: Which lasted till they were fifty years old, and no longer. For then they generally began to decay, and grew less able to bear Burdens: Which was their Work then, to carry the Tabernacle when it was to be removed, and all the Utensils belonging to it. Which Work being now at an End, they seem to have continued till their Death to discharge their Business at the Temple: Which was more easy, after that was built, and required less Labour.

And their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand.] The Priests are not included in this Number: Which is so great that it may very well incline us to think, that many of them served rather for State and Ornament, than for Necessity. *Abarbinel* here cries out, "See whether in all the Countries there
" were so many Singers and Musicians, and
" other Officers employed in their Temples,
" as there was in the House of the Sanctuary.

" Who

“ Who ever saw the like? Who ever beheld
 “ such Sanctity, such Ornaments, and such
 “ Praising of God?”

Ver. 4. *Of which twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.]* These were employed about the Sacrifices and Offerings, which they killed, and flayed, and washed: And served the Priests in all other Parts of their Ministry about them. Which being very numerous, there were the greater number of *Levites* to attend this Work, viz. a thousand every Week: For they took their Courses, which being twenty and four, in so many Weeks they came about again. See their Business, ver. 28, 29.

And six thousand were officers and judges.] God appointed Judges and Officers to be settled in all their Gates, Deut. xvi. 18. but many think, there had been a long Neglect in this Matter: And that David himself could not restore their Judicatures to their ancient Order, and Dignity, till the latter End of his Reign. For being hindred by perpetual Wars, he was forced to be content with such Judicatures as had been wont to be executed (which in many Things was very defective) only reserving Appeals to himself, in Causes of great Moment, 2 Sam. xv. 2. But now he takes Care of this so necessary a Part of Government, and having numbred the *Levites*, appointed them their certain Business, which had been before unsettled and undetermined: Employing them both in Ecclesiastical and Civil Affairs, as *Bertram* discourses in his Book *De Republ. Jud.* p. 124. But a late Writer makes a doubt, whether the *Israelites* observed that Command of *Moses* at all, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*; the Heads of their Tribes taking upon them, for a long Time, to determine all controverted Matters. But now the *Levites* were constituted, in the Cities where they dwelt, to be both Officers and Judges. All agree, that *Shoterim* commonly signify such Officers as execute the Sentence of the Judges. See my Notes upon Deut. xvi. 18. and other places. But here, being placed before Judges, we are not to take them for such inferior Persons, but for Men of greater Authority; whom the *Targum* calls *Governors*: Such as our Justices of the Peace are, who saw good Order kept according to the Law: As the Judges were such as decided Causes in their several Courts. See *Campegius Vitringa*, in his Book, *De Synag. Veteri*, Lib. I. Par. ii. Cap. 8.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, four thousand were porters.]* Who were to take Care that no unclean Person entered into the Temple; or any thing brought into it which ought not to be there; or any thing carried out of it which belonged only to that Place: And that nothing was done about the Door of the Court, which might disturb the People at their Prayers.

And four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made (said David) to praise therewith.] Thus he hath given an Account how the whole thirty eight thousand (mentioned v. 3.) were disposed of to their Offices. And this last four thousand had some among them that were more eminent than the rest; being their Instructors, both in Singing and Playing upon

Instruments: And perhaps some of them, being very skillful in Musick, contrived Instruments, and commanded them to be made.

Ver. 6. *And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi, namely Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.]* They took their Turns of waiting, some going off, and others coming on, to perform all the fore-mentioned Duties: Which David, the man of God, ordered (as he speaks 2 Chron. viii. 14.) by the Direction of Gad and of Nathan the Prophets, who had a Command for it from God, as we read in this Book, ch. xxix. 25.

Ver. 7. *Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei.]* Who were their immediate Ancestors, is not said, nor is it material to be known.

Ver. 8. *The sons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three.]* It is likely they were not his Sons, but some of his Posterity: For so the Word *Sons* signifies in the Verses following.

Ver. 9. *The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan.]* This Shimei was descended from one of the three Sons of Laadan.

Ver. 10. *And the sons of Shimei were Jathath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriab. These four were the sons of Shimei.]* That is, the Sons of that Shimei, Brother of Laadan, mentioned ver. 7.

Ver. 11. *And Jathath was the chief, and Zizab the second.]* He is called Zina in the foregoing Verse.

But Jeush, and Beriab had not many sons.] As their two elder Brothers had.

Therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their fathers house.] They were accounted but as one Family: And not called by the Name of their Fathers, Jeush, and Beriab; but by the Name of Shimei their Grand-father.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, Uzziel, four.]* See Exod. vi. 18.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses.]* Exod. vi. 20.

And Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever.] The Business of Aaron and his Sons was very different from the rest of the *Levites*: For they were set apart for the special Services of the Priesthood; to sanctify, that is, to minister in an holy Manner, the most holy Things. His Sons burnt Incense every Day; and the High-Priest went into the most holy Place, on the great Day of Expiation, with the Blood of Expiation: And when he came out, blessed the People, as the Priest who offered Incense did every Day, at the Conclusion of the Sacrifice.

Ver. 14. *Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.]* Tho' Moses was so great a Man, the supreme Governor of his People while he lived, and had such Familiarity with the Divine Majesty; yet his Sons were not advanced to any Dignity, but he left them simple *Levites*, not so much as Priests. Such was the wonderful Humility and Modesty of this holy Man, that he did not aim at great Things for his Posterity. Which per-

haps is here noted, that none might presume, because of their noble Descent to meddle with the Priesthood : Which was settled in the Family of *Aaron* ; as the Civil Government of the People was left to *Joshua*, a Man of another Tribe, and *Moses* his Servant.

Ver. 15. *The Sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer, Exod. xviii. 3, 4.*

Ver. 16. *Of the Sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the Chief.] Who is called Shobael, xxiv. 20.*

Ver. 17. *The Sons of Eliezer were, Rehabiah the Chief. And Eliezer had none other Sons.] The Word for Chief in the Hebrew is, the first : That is, the First-born, after whom he had no other Son : But a great many Grand-sons, who are frequently called Sons.*

But the Sons of Rehabiah were very many.] Which in the Hebrew is thus expressed, were highly multiplied. From whence the Targum took a Conceit (as several Jewish Doctors have done) that they were multiplied to above six hundred thousand : Merely, because the same Phrase is used of the Children of Israel, in Exod. i. 7. that they multiplied exceedingly in Egypt ; that is, to this Number, Exod. xii. 17. Whereby they imagine God fulfilled his Intentions to Moses, if he would not intercede for the Israelites, that he would make him a great Nation, ix. 14. But these are idle Speculations ; wherein they abound, since they were abandoned by God.

Ver. 18. *Of the Sons of Izhar ; Shelomith the Chief.] Who is called Shelomoth, xxiv. 22.*

Ver. 19. *Of the Sons of Hebron ; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jehaziel the third, and Jehaneam the fourth.*

Ver. 20. *Of the Sons of Uzziel ; Micah the first, and Josphab the second.*

Ver. 21. *The Sons of Merari ; Mabli, and Musshi : The Sons of Mabli, Eleazar, and Kish :*

Ver. 22. *And Eleazar died, and had no Sons, but Daughters and their Brethren, the Sons of Kish took them.] Their Cousins married them, as the Targum expounds it.*

Ver. 23. *The Sons of Musshi ; Mubli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.*

Ver. 24. *These are the Sons of Levi, after the House of their Fathers ; even the Chief of the Fathers ; as they were counted by Number of Names by their Polls, that did the Work for the Service of the House of the LORD, from the Age of twenty Years and upwards.] They were numbred twice, as they were in the Time of Moses : The first time all from thirty, the second time from twenty. And these here mentioned were of the last sort ; who were fit to minister in some Things belonging to the Service of the Levites, at twenty Years old : Tho' they were not employed in the rest till thirty. See upon Numb. viii. 24. where they are ordered to begin at five and twenty ; tho' they did not compleatly minister till thirty.*

Ver. 25. *For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given Rest unto his People, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever.] That is, constantly attend upon the Service of God there settled. Which was the Reason for this new Order, that the Levites should begin their Ministry at twenty Years of Age : Because Israel having Rest was very much multiplied, and there being greater Resort to Jerusalem, the Levites had*

more Work to do at the Temple. But it must here be noted, that those Words *for ever*, suppose their Obedience to God, (as in Chapter xxviii. 4.) in which if they failed, they were not to continue in *Jerusalem*, but be expelled out of it.

Ver. 26. *And also unto the Levites : they shall no more carry the Tabernacle, nor any Vessels of it for the Service thereof.] It should rather be translated, As concerning the Levites : They were no longer to have that burdensome Work of carrying the Tabernacle and its Vessels when they were removed : But had a much easier Service ; which they might begin sooner than formerly : It requiring not so much Strength of Body, as Readiness of Mind.*

Ver. 27. *For by the last Words of David, the Levites were numbred from twenty Years old and above.] This was his last Will about this Matter : after he had well considered what they had to do, and what Number was necessary to perform every Part of this Duty. For some of which they were able enough at twenty Years of Age : When they might be called Probationers till they were thirty. And there would not have been a sufficient Number for all the Work, unless they had come to it at the Age of twenty.*

Ver. 28. *Because their Office was to wait on the Sons of Aaron,] Which the Levites were able to do at the Age of twenty Years. To attend, for Instance, at the Tabernacle ; but not to carry the Ark or the Tabernacle.*

For the Service of the House of the LORD.] This is a general Expression of what they were to do ; the Particulars of which follow ; to assist in the Courts, and in the Chambers, in making clean the holy Vessels, and cleansing the Courts, and taking Care nothing was wanting for the Service of the Sanctuary.

Ver. 29. *Both for the Shew-bread, and for the fine Flour for the Meat-offering, and the unleavened Cakes, and for that which is baked in the Pan, and for that which is fried,] They were to prepare the Shew-bread, to be set on the Table every Week by the Priests ; and to see that there was a just Quantity of fine Flour, for the Meat-offering Morning and Evening ; and that the unleavened Cakes were rightly made : With every Thing that was to be baked or fried. Of which in the second Chapter of Leviticus.*

And for all Manner of Measure and Size.] They were to see also that the just Measure for Things liquid, and the just Size for Things dry were exactly kept, and not altered. For all Measures and Weights (by which all that were used in the Country were to be made) were kept in the Sanctuary, in the Custody of the Levites. Hence it is, that we read often of the Shekel of the Sanctuary : Not that there were two sorts of Shekels, one Sacred, and another Civil ; but because Weights and Measures were reckoned inter Sacra, among holy Things : The Examples, as I said, of them all being kept in the Sanctuary. And so they were in the Temples of the Pagans, and afterwards in Christian Churches : As appears by Justinian's Novels, cxxviii. Cap. 15. So Villalpandus and our Bishop Walton have observed. Unto which may be added, that Constantine the Great had gone before him in this :

For he commanded the Cubit whereby the *Egyptians* measured the Increase of *Nilus*, and was kept in the Temple of *Serapis*, to be translated into one of the Christian Churches, that there it might be preserved the safer by true Religion; as both *Socrates* and *Sozomen* testify in their *Ecclesiastical History*, Lib. i. Cap. 18. Lib. v. Cap. 3. *Julian* indeed caused it to be restored to *Serapis*: But that Temple being burnt, *Rufinus* tells us the Church had it again in its Possession. All which shews, that this ancient Piece of Religion, to preserve Weights, and Measures, as sacred Things, continued after the Time of *David*; and perhaps was before it.

Ver. 30. *And to stand every Morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at Even.*] At the Time when the Priests offered the Morning and Even Sacrifice.

Ver. 31. *And to offer all Burnt Sacrifices unto the LORD in the Sabbaths, in the New-Moons, and on the set Feasts by Number,*] It was no Part of their Business to offer Burnt-Sacrifices, which belonged to the Priests alone. Therefore the Meaning is, to praise and give Thanks to God at the Offering of Sacrifices at those Solemnities, as well as every Morning and Even. And to see there were a just Number of Sacrifices then offered as the Law prescribed.

According to the Order commanded unto them continually before the LORD.] That is, in their Courses, wherein they were commanded to wait continually when their Turn came.

Ver. 32. *And that they should keep the Charge of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Charge of the holy Place, and the Charge of the Sons of Aaron their Brethren, in the Service of the House of the LORD.*] These Words belong to those that went just before; signifying, that in their Order, when their Course came to attend, they served either about the Tabernacle, or preparing the Shew-bread in the holy Place, or in any other Things, wherein the Priests had Occasion to employ them: And the rest of their Time they spent at home, in their several Cities; where they studied, and taught the Law.

C H A P. XXIV.

Ver. 1. **N**OW these are the Divisions of the Sons of Aaron: The Sons of Aaron; *Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.*] To avoid all Confusion, now that they were much increased, *David* distributed the Priests, as he had done the *Levites*, into several Courses. Which, no doubt, was by a Divine Direction as well as the other: Or rather, there was greater Reason he should have God's Order for it: They being higher Ministers of his, than the *Levites* were.

Ver. 2. *But Nadab and Abihu died before their Father, and had no Children: Therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the Priest's Office.*] From these two all the Families of the Priests descended, who were now to be disposed into a regular Performance of their Duty.

Ver. 3. *And David distributed them, both Zadok of the Sons of Eleazar, and Abimelech of the Sons of Ithamar,*] These two (*Zadok* and *Abimelech*) were the chief Persons, in *David's* Days,

of the Posterity of those Sons of *Aaron, Eleazar* and *Ithamar*.

According to their Offices in their Service.] He determined, when they and those Priests who depended on them, should perform their Office in the Temple-Service.

Ver. 4. *And there were more Chief Men found of the Sons of Eleazar, than of the Sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided.*] Accordingly *David* divided them into certain Classes and Courses, as the *Targum* expounds it.

Among the Sons of Eleazar there were sixteen Chief Men of the House of their Fathers, and eight among the Sons of Ithamar, according to the House of their Fathers.] He appointed, therefore sixteen Courses of the Sons of *Eleazar*, under as many Heads of their Families: And half as many of the Posterity of *Ithamar*. Which *Kimchi*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors, explain in this Manner. In the Days of *Moses* there were but eight Courses in the whole: Four of *Eleazar's* Family, and four of *Ithamar's*. But in *Samuel's* Days they were grown to sixteen: Eight of the one, and as many of the other. But in the End of *David's* Reign they were enlarged to twenty four Courses; two Thirds of which were assigned to the Sons of *Eleazar*, because they were more numerous than the other: And the Sons of *Ithamar* continued as they were before; having eight Courses. But the Holy Scriptures never mention any settled Courses till this Time (as *Dr. Lightfoot* observes in his *Temple-Service*, Chap. vi.) tho' their Doctors assert it to explain that Precept, *Deut. xxviii. 6.*

Ver. 5. *Thus were they divided by Lot,*] That there might be no Occasion for Complaint: When all was ordered by a Divine Disposition, according to very ancient Custom. For the Choice of Persons by Lot, into sacred Offices, was used from the Beginning of the World, as *Grotius* observes in his Book, *De Imper. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra*, Cap. x. Sect. 5.

One Sort with another,] Both the Sons of *Eleazar*, and of *Ithamar* were thus chosen, who should wait together.

For the Governours of the Sanctuary,] The Words in the *Hebrew* are, *Share Kodesh*: Which signify the principal Ministers about Holy Things.

And Governours of the House of God,] There is no Word for *House* in the *Hebrew*; where we only read *Share Elohim*: Which seem to signify the chief Judges.

Were of the Sons of Eleazar, and of the Sons of Ithamar.] These two Families had obtained the chief Functions both in the Temple, and in the Civil Government: Wherein they could not be distributed so well any way as by Lot; without Danger of Envy among themselves.

Ver. 6. *And Shemaiah the Son of Nethaneel the Scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the King and the Princes, and Zadok the Priest, and Abimelech the Son of Abiathar, and before the Chief of the Fathers of the Priests and Levites.*] In perpetual Memory of the Thing (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) this Divine Writer sets down the Name of the publick Notary, by whom their Names were written, and put into the Urn, out of which the Lots were to be drawn. Which, that there might be no Suspi-

Suspicion of Fraud, were drawn before the King, the Princes, both the Chief Priests, (the High-Priest, and the Sagan) and before the chief Persons of the several Families of *Priests* and *Levites*. Whence it is reasonable to conclude, that *David* did not make this Regulation, by his mere Royal Power, but by a Divine Direction. Which he had in this, as in the Order he gave about the building of the Temple; (*chap. xxviii.*) and he seems here not to have acted by an absolute Authority, but to have advised with the High-Priest, and other Persons of great Note, how to proceed.

One principal Household being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar.] These Words are something obscure: But the meaning is, that one of the principal Families of *Eleazar* was first taken, and then one of *Ithamar's*; and after that one of *Eleazar's* again, and so by turns till all was done: That is, till there were eight of each. After which, those of *Eleazar* alone were distributed under their several Heads.

Ver. 7. *Now the first Lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah.]* The first Lot that was drawn out of the Urn had the Name of *Jehoiarib* upon it: So that his Family had the Precedence, and waited in the first Place. This was esteemed a great Honour; for *Josephus* reckons himself noble, not only because he was descended ἐξ ἱερέων from the Priests, but ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ἐμεμερῆς ἡ εἰκοσιτεσσάρων, but from the first Course of the four and twenty. For this made a great Difference: *Mattathias* also, the Father of the *Maccabees*, descended from *Jehoiarib*, as we read, 1 *Maccab. ii.* 54.

Ver. 8. *The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim.]* I have nothing to observe concerning these, and the rest that follow to Verse 19. but only that *Zachariah* the Father of *John Baptist* was of the eighth Course of these Priests, viz. that of *Abijah*, mentioned ver. 10. as we read in the first of *St. Luke*. For as *Josephus* testifies, this Order of the Courses continued till his Time, that is, till the Destruction of the second Temple.

Ver. 19. *These were the Orderings of them in their Service to come into the House of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their Father,]* Under the Inspection of the High-Priest, who being the Successor of *Aaron*, is called by his Name. He took care that this Order should be observed in such manner, as is here prescribed: None of them anticipating their Course, nor thrusting in themselves to attend before their Time, but waiting till their Time came. And then every Course served a Week, coming in on the Sabbath; and going out the next before the burning of the Incense at the Morning Sacrifice, when the Shew-bread was set on the Table, as *Scaliger* observes out of the *Jewish* Writers, in his *Notes* upon the *Fragments* at the End of his Book *De Emend. Temporum*, p. 54. Upon the three great Festivals indeed, when all Priests, as well as others, were bound to appear before God, they came out of their Course, and, that they might not be idle, officiated in such Things as properly belonged to those Solemnities. But the ordina-

ry Business, for the daily Burnt-sacrifice, and the Freewill-offerings, was managed by those only whose Course it was to wait. And thus the *Jews* understand those Words, *Deut. xviii.* 6, 7. *The Levite (i. e. the Priests who were of that Tribe) that shall come to the Place which the LORD his God shall chuse, (that is, at the three solemn Feasts) then he shall minister in the House of the LORD his God, as all his Brethren the Levites do, (which is meant of the Priests, for they only ministered before God, not the Levites) they shall have like Portion to eat; that is, of the Sacrifices which were then offered at those solemn Times, they were to have their Share, with the rest of the Priests then in Attendance, but the Levites did not eat of them:*

Beside that which cometh by the Sale of his Patrimony, or, as it is in the Hebrew, by the Sale of his Fathers.] That is, say they, except the Portion of the daily Sacrifices, and Freewill-offerings, which by the Ordinance of their Fathers, *Moses* and *Aaron*, belonged only to those Priests, who were in their ordinary Attendance in their Week.

As the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.] By his Servant *David*.

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the Sons of Levi were these: Of the Sons of Amram; Shubael: of the Sons of Shubael; Jekdeiah.]* Now he speaks of the rest of the *Levites*, who were not Priests, who are mentioned in the foregoing *Chap. xxiii.* 16, 17, &c. and here named again to distinguish them from the Priests, and to shew that they also had their Places assigned them by Lot, ver. 31. I have nothing to note concerning those that follow between this Verse and that, but only this: That several are mentioned as descended from *Merari*, who are not mentioned in the foregoing *Chapters*, nor any where else. For which, no question, the Author of this Book had good Authority, tho' we cannot, without the Help of such Records as he perused, give an Account of it. See *Buxtorf's Anticritica*, p. 1014.

Ver. 31. *These likewise cast Lots over against their Brethren the Sons of Aaron, in the Presence of David the King, and Zadok and Abimelech, and the Chief of the Fathers of the Priests and Levites,]* There was the like Solemnity used in their Distribution, as there was in that of the Priests, by casting Lots: Whereby they knew what *Levites* should wait, in every Course with the Sons of *Aaron*.

Even the principal Fathers over against their younger Brethren.] This is expressed very obscurely; but the meaning is, that the elder and younger had their Places by Lots, not by Seniority of Houses. They that were of greater Dignity drew Lots against those that were of less: And they were to take their Courses, as they fell; either to the elder or the younger Family.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. **M**oreover *David*, and the Captains of the Host,] It is absurd to think, that the Commanders in War meddled with ordering the Tribe of *Levi*, and the Service of the Temple. Therefore by *the Host* we are to understand

derstand (as our Mr. Thorndike well observes) the Companies of Priests, that waited upon the Service of God at the Temple: The Captains of whom, (*i. e.* the chief Leaders) together with David, divided the Singers, as they had done the Priests, *c. xxiv. 3, 6, 7.* Tho' elsewhere *c. xxiii. 6.* David alone is mentioned to have done it. *Rights of the Church, p. 230.*

Separated to the Service,] Of God in the Temple.

Of the Sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun,] These were the chief Persons among the Levites, whose Families were separated to the following Service.

Who should prophesy,] Sing Psalms, which David and other Prophets composed. For these young Men were not Prophets, as their Fathers were but are said to prophesy, because they sung in the Service of God those Divine Prophetical Hymns, which were composed by their Fathers, who were Men divinely inspired. Thus the *Talmudists* say in *Bava Batbra, cap. i.* that all the Hymns we find in the Bible were made by Adam, Melchisedec, Abraham, Moses, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and David: Who collected them into one Volume. But this is a foolish Tradition and very new.

With Harps, and Psalteries, and with Cymbals,] There were also Pipes, or Hautbois used upon several Occasions, together with the Trumpets. The Difference between these three here mentioned, is better described by Dr. Lightfoot out of Josephus, than by any I have met withal; who observes, that the other *Israelites*, if allied to the Priests by Marriage, might if they had Skill, join in this Instrumental Musick; but none besides the Levites in the Vocal. See his *Temple Service, chap. vii. sect. 2.* where he likewise notes what Psalms were to be sung every Day of the Week.

And this was the first Office of the Levites; the two other are explained in the two following Chapters.

And the Number of the Workmen, according to the Service was,] It had better be translated, the Number of the Men of the Ministry (*i. e.* of those who ministered in singing and playing on Instruments) according to their Service, was, as follows.

Ver. 2. *Of the Sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Netaniab, and Asrelah, the Sons of Asaph, under the Hands of Asaph,]* Under his Government, as their *Præcentor*: Or, who taught and instructed them, in Singing and Musick.

Which prophesied according to the Order of the King.] The Targum understand this, as if Asaph prophesied by the Holy Ghost, and was constituted the Head of these by the King. But the Word Prophecy is of very large Extent; signifying sometimes, as I said before, nothing more, but singing divinely inspired Hymns. Thus Miriam is called a Prophetess (*Exod. xv. 20.*) because she led up the Women to praise God, with Timbrels and Dances. And indeed Musick and Singing were in ancient Times had in such Esteem and Veneration, that they who excelled in this Faculty, were look'd upon as Persons divinely moved. So Quintilian ob-

serves, as a known Truth, *L. i. Instit. cap. 10. Quis ignorat, musicen tantum jam illis antiquis temporibus non studii modo, verum etiam venerationis habuisse, ut iidem musici, & vates judicarentur.* Who is so ignorant as not to know that Musick in those ancient Times, was not only so much studied, but had in such Veneration, that the same Men who were Musicians, were accounted Prophets and wise Men.

Ver. 3. *Of Jeduthun: the Sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jesaiab; Hashabiah, and Mattitiah, six, under the Hands of their Father Jeduthun.]* Here are but five named: But it appears afterward (*ver. 17.* when the Lots were cast) there was another, whose Name was Shimei. Who being now very young, and not yet able either to sing or to play, is not named in this Verse. But that he might be instructed and learn both, he is chosen to be the Head of a Course, when he should be fit for it. Thus D. Kimchi explains this Matter.

Who prophesied with a Harp, to give thanks, and to praise the LORD.] The Harp was a most noble Instrument, in which Jeduthun seems to be peculiarly skilled, and therewith praised God; which is called prophesying.

Ver. 4. *Of Heman: the Sons of Heman; Bukiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romanti-ezer, Jashbekashah, Mallotki, Hotbir, and Mahazioth.]* He had the most numerous Issue of these three; and they all had Families who were employed in this Service.

Ver. 5. *All these were the Sons of Heman, the King's Seer,]* He was a Prophet, in whose Company the King delighted: And with whom he advised in difficult Affairs.

In the Words of God,] Especially in Divine Matters.

To lift up the Horn,] In the Temple they used also Wind Musick: Which many think to have been Trumpets made of Horn: But the Priests only blew with Trumpets in the Temple, while the Levites sung to those other Instruments. Therefore others understand this, of the Hymns they sung to magnify the Power, Greatness, and Exaltation of David's Kingdom: Or, rather, of the Kingdom of the Messiah, whom Zachary in his Song, *Luke i. 69.* calls the Horn of Salvation. For the Power of any thing in Scripture is expressed by a Horn; in which lies the Strength of some Creatures. And from these Words Victorinus Strigelius gathers, that Heman was David's Seer in politick Affairs, which belonged to the Confirmation and Settlement of his Kingdom. *Cornu enim significat regimen & regnum;* for a Horn signifies Government, and Kingdom. But the first Sense seems to me to be most natural, that at stated Times they blew aloud with Trumpets made of Horns: For such, I suppose, they might use, tho' the Priests only could blow with the Silver Trumpets. And thus the famous Bochartus interprets these Words, *at set Times to blow aloud with Trumpets made of Horns.* In his Preface to his *Hicrozoicon.*

And God gave to Heman fourteen Sons and three Daughters.] Some have fancied there are fifteen mentioned in the foregoing Verse: But the

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the Jews look upon Romanti-ezer as one Name; and so we take it: Which is justified by ver. 31.

Ver. 6. *All these were under the Hands of their Father, for Song in the House of the LORD, with Cymbals, Psalteries, and Harps, for the Service of the House of God,]* The whole Number of these was four and twenty, who under their several Fathers, Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman, regulated the Choir in their Singing and Musick: Being the Instructors and Governors of those who were under them. It is likely they set the Psalms to Musick which David composed: Or, if he himself modulated them, they sung them in the Tunes he directed, with the Musical Instruments here mentioned.

According to the King's Order, to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.] These were Prophets, who composed many of the Songs, which their Sons sung by their Direction: As appears from 2 Chron. xxix. 10. where it is said they sung Praises, in the Words of David and Asaph the Seer.

Ver. 7. *So the Number of them, with their Brethren, that were instructed in the Songs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.]* This was the whole Number of those who were skilful in Singing, who, under the Persons before-mentioned, were distributed (as it here follows) into several Courses, after the same Manner that the Priests had been: With whom they were to attend in their Order. For twelve of these Singers, with their Governor, came and waited every Week; at the End of which they were succeeded by other twelve, till the Course was finished: And then it began again, where it did at first. Now twelve times twenty four amount to two hundred fourscore and eight.

It is no wonder that there were so many of them found very skilful in Singing and Musick: For David himself was a great Musician and Poet, and every one knows how much the Inclination of the supreme Governor serves to the promoting of Arts among the People.

Ver. 8. *And they cast Lots, Ward against Ward,]* Being thus distributed into twenty four Courses, they cast Lots, one Course against another, which should wait first, and in order succeed one another.

As well the Small as the Great, the Teacher as the Scholar.] So that they did not begin and succeed one another, according to the Order of Age, or of Learning, but as God disposed them by their Lot. The last Words [*the Teacher as the Scholar*] the LXX translate *τελειῶν καὶ μαθητῶν*, *those that were perfect, and those that were learners.* They were called perfect who were Masters of their Art, able to instruct others, who learnt of them.

Ver. 9. *Now the first Lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph,]* Who was not his eldest Son; see ver. 2. After the Word Joseph, we are to supply the Words that follow, in the rest of these Classes, *who with his Brethren and Sons were twelve:* Otherwise the Number of two hundred fourscore and eight, ver. 7. will not be compleat.

The second to Gedaliah,] Who was the eldest Son to Jeduthun, ver. 5.

Who with his Brethren and Sons were twelve.] These Words, as Rasi observes, are to be referred to Joseph as well as Gedaliah: For he mentions them both, in one and the same Verse; and therefore he only saith once with respect to both, *he and his Sons and Brethren.* Where by Brethren is meant their Kindred.

Ver. 10. *The third to Zaccur, he, his Sons and his Brethren were twelve.]* He was the eldest Son of Asaph, ver. 2.

Ver. 11. *The fourth to Izri, &c.]* Called Zeri, ver. 3. who was the second Son of Jeduthun.

Ver. 12. *The fifth to Nethaniah, &c.]* This Lot fell upon the third Son of Asaph, ver. 2.

Ver. 13. *The sixth to Bukkiab, &c.]* Who was the eldest Son of Heman, ver. 4.

Ver. 14. *The seventh to Jesharelab, &c.]* Called Asarelab, ver. 2. the youngest Son of Asaph.

Ver. 15. *The eighth to Jeshaiab, &c.]* Who was the third Son of Jeduthun, ver. 3.

Ver. 16. *The ninth to Mattaniah, &c.]* Who was the third Son of Heman, ver. 4.

Ver. 17. *The tenth to Shimei, &c.]* The youngest Son of Jeduthun, as I have noted upon ver. 3.

Ver. 18. *The eleventh to Azareel, &c.]* The third Son of Heman, who is called Uzziel in the same Verse.

Ver. 19. *The twelfth to Hasbabiab, &c.]* The fourth Son of Jeduthun, ver. 4.

Ver. 20. *The thirteenth to Shubael, &c.]* The fourth Son of Heman, called there Shebuel, ver. 4.

Ver. 21. *The fourteenth to Mattathiah, &c.]* Who was the fifth Son of Jeduthun, ver. 3.

Ver. 22. *The fifteenth to Jeremoth, &c.]* The fifth Son of Heman, ver. 4.

Ver. 23. *The sixteenth to Hananiah, &c.]* The next Son of Heman.

Ver. 24. *The seventeenth is Joshebassab, &c.]* Who was the eleventh Son of Heman.

Ver. 25. *The eighteenth to Hanani,]* Who was the seventh Son of Heman.

Ver. 26. *The nineteenth to Mallothi, &c.]* Who was the twelfth Son of Heman.

Ver. 27. *The twentieth to Eliabab, &c.]* Who was the eighth Son of Heman.

Ver. 28. *The one and twentieth to Hotbir, &c.]* Who was the eleventh Son of Heman.

Ver. 29. *The two and twentieth to Giddalti, &c.]* Who was the ninth Son of Heman.

Ver. 30. *The three and twentieth to Mahazioth, &c.]* Who was the youngest Son of Heman.

Ver. 31. *The four and twentieth to Romanti-ezer, &c.]* The tenth Son of Heman.

Thus all things were disposed, for the preserving Order, and avoiding all Disputes about Precedence: There being no Respect had in this Divine Distribution to their Birth, but the younger in Course preceded the elder.

C H A P. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *Concerning the Divisions of the Porters.]* As some of the Levites were chosen to be Singers (of which an Account is given in the foregoing Chapter) so others were appointed

appointed to be Porters. Which were fixed Offices, (as Dr. Lightfoot observes) which they might not change: None of them being permitted to intrude into the Office of the other: And neither of them into the Priesthood. It was an Office of great Dignity, and Men of the best Quality were put into it: They having the Charge of the holy Things, ver. 20, 22, 24, 26.

Of the Korbites was Meshelemiah.] Called Sbelemiah, ver. 14.

The Son of Kore, of the Sons of Asaph.] Not of Asaph the Musician, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, for he was of the Family of Gershon (ver. 41.) but of another Asaph, called Eliasaph, and sometimes Jasaph, of the Line of Kohath, chap. vi. 23. ix. 19.

Ver. 2. And the Sons of Meshelemiah were, Zechariah the first-born, Jedaiel the second, Zebadiab the third, Jathniel the fourth,

Ver. 3. Elam the fifth, Jehobanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.

Ver. 4. Moreover, the Sons of Obed-edom were Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,

Ver. 5. Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God blessed him.] With a numerous Off-spring, as the Targum glosses upon the last Words: Because he entertained the Ark in his House with great Reverence. Upon which Account God did him the Honour to let him see of his Sons and Grand-Sons fourscore and two: Who were chief Men among the Levites. This the Targum had said before, one only being wanting of this Number. See upon c. xiii. 14. But what the Scripture saith is sufficient to shew how God blessed him with a numerous Posterity, without the Help of such monstrous Stories, as some of the Jews relate.

Ver. 6. Also unto Shemaiah his Son were Sons born, that ruled throughout the House of their Father:] Being Men of great Authority in that Family.

For they were mighty Men of Valour.] Which was requisite in Men who had this Office: For they were to watch and guard the House of God, Night and Day. And not only to open and shut the Doors of the Mountain of the House, and of the Court of the Women (for the Priests opened and shut the Gates of the other Courts) but to attend there to prevent any thing that might be done to the Prejudice of the Peace, Safety and Purity of the Place. And likewise, as appears by what follows, they had the Guard of some Treasures, which required Men of Courage to defend them.

Ver. 7. The Sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose Brethren were strong Men; Elibu and Semachiah.] Their Names are recorded, with two of their Brethren, or Cousins; who are likewise noted to be strong Men. That is, not only Men of great bodily Strength, but of great Courage and Resolution. So it is translated in the Margin, out of the Hebrew, Sons of Valour. But Strength of Body was a principal Requisite in this Service; for the Doors of the Temple were so massy and weighty, that the Hands of many Men (as Josephus saith) were needful to open and shut them.

Ver. 8. All these of the Sons of Obed-edom: they and their Sons and their Brethren, able Men for Strength for the Service, were threescore and two of Obed-edom.] This was a great Number, which he lived to see descended from him, and from his Sons.

Ver. 9. And Sbelemiah had Sons and Brethren, strong Men, eighteen.] Still their Strength is mentioned, as a Qualification for this Service.

Ver. 10. Also Hofab of the Sons of Merari had Sons; Simri the Chief (for tho' he was not the first-born, yet his Father made him the Chief.)] Because his elder Brother was feeble, or some other way unfit for the Service. For, as Jacob gave the Kingdom to Judah, and the Priesthood to Levi, and put Reuben his first-born from his Right, because of his Crime: So there was some weighty Cause, no doubt, why this Man had the Right of Primogeniture given him, which was not to be altered upon the Account of Affection, Deut. xxi. 16, 17.

Ver. 11. Hilkiab the second, Tebaliab the third, Zechariah the fourth: All the Sons and Brethren of Hofab were thirteen.] Who are not all named, but these who are the Principal.

Ver. 12. Among these were the Divisions of the Porters, even among the chief Men,] They were distributed into Courses, as the Priests and Levites were: And these were principal Commanders over them: Being the most illustrious among their Brethren, and therefore particularly named.

Having Wards one against another,] Having Charges, or Custodies answerable to their Brethren: That is, to the Levites, who attended as these did.

To minister in the House of the LORD.] This was not a vile Ministry (as the Word Porter sounds among us) but they were like the standing Guard of a King in his Palace: And so the Word, I observed before, had better be rendered. See ix. 17. Who kept the Treasures of the Temple, as it follows, v. 20, 26. and Officers and Judges also were chosen out of them, (v. 29, 30, 32.) which shews they were eminent Persons: Some of them being very learned and wise, ver. 14. Tho', I suppose, they were not Judges of the Law, but of other Matters.

Ver. 13. And they cast Lots as well the small as the great,] Without Respect to their Age or Dignity.

According to the House of their Fathers.] Every Family having a distinct Lot drawn for it.

For every Gate.] That it might be determined at what Gate of the Temple they were to wait.

Ver. 14. And the Lot Eastward fell to Sbelemiah;] Who is called Meshelemiah, ver. 1.

Then for Zechariah his Son (a wise Counsellor) they cast Lots, and his Lot came out Northward.] He was as much reputed for Prudence, as others were for Strength, or Valour: And it was as necessary in the Management of many of their Affairs.

Ver. 15. To Obed-edom Southward, and to his Sons, the House of Asuphim.] Many learned Men take Asuphim to signify the Treasury of the Temple, or the Place where Things dedicated were laid up. This they ground, first, upon the Import of the Word, which betokens Col-

lections, or *Gatherings*, as we translate it in the Margin: And *secondly*, because *Obed-edom* (whose Sons are here said to be placed at *Asuppin*) is said in the 2 *Chron.* xxv. to have the Custody of the Treasures. But tho' this be granted, it remains still a very difficult Matter to find where *Asuppin* was. After a long Discussion of it, Dr. *Lightfoot* concludes, that *Asuppin* were two Gates in the Western Wall, which stood most South, or nearest to *Jerusalem*; and that the House of *Asuppin* was a large Building which run between them, and was a Treasury of divers Rooms for laying up Things that served the Use of the Temple. See *Temple-Service*, Chap. v. Sect. 3.

Ver. 16. *To Shuppin and Hosab the Lot came forth Westward, with the Gate Shallecheth, by the Causey of the going up,*] This Gate which in *Solomon's* Time was called *Shallecheth*, in the Time of *Herod's* Temple was called the Gate of *Coponius*. Which is said here to be by the Causey of the going up: Because it was by that Ascent which *Solomon* made for his own Passage up from his own House to the Temple, 1 *Kings* x. 5. 2 *Chron.* ix. 4. Which *Josephus* thus expresses (as Dr. *Lightfoot* observes) *A Gate led to the King's House from the Temple, the Valley between them being filled up for the Passage.* From whence the Gate was called by the Name of *Shallecheth*, which signifies *casting up*; because of the Causey that was cast up to lead to it, from the King's Palace: This being the ordinary Way to the House of God.

Ward against Ward.] I suppose the Meaning is, that they gaurded each of these Gates of *Asuppin*: Or, as others take it, they guarded By Turns; when one went off, another coming on. But the most learned Dr. *Alix*, (whom I consulted about it) thinks these Words signify, that their Stations were at the four Points of Heaven, opposite one to the other.

Ver. 17. *Eastward were six Levites, Northward four a Day, Southward four a Day, and toward Asuppin two and two.*] That is, two at each Gate of *Asuppin*, before-mentioned. The Distribution of the Porters into four and twenty Courses, is not so plainly and distinctly set down in Scripture, as is the Distribution of the Priests and Singers. Yet (as Dr. *Lightfoot* observes) it may be fairly concluded, from two Places: whereof this is one, in these two Verses, 16, 17. where the Fathers of the Porters are summed up, to the very same Number, that the first Fathers of the other Courses were, viz. to four and twenty. Among all the Porters (saith *Kimchi* on this Place) *there were four and twenty, according to the rest of the Courses; six on the East-side, four on the North, four on the South, at Asuppin two and two, (four in all) four on the West, and two at Parbar: Behold four and twenty.* The other Place is, 2 *Chron.* viii. 14. where the Porters go in the very same Equipage (as he speaks) as to the Matter of Division into Courses, with the Priests, and the Singers. See *Temple-Service*, Chap. vii.

Ver. 18. *At Parbar Westward, four at the Causey, and two at Parbar.*] This Gate, it appears from this Place, was in the West-Quarter, and the West-gate to the Causey or *Shallecheth*. It signifies, some think, the same with *Parvar*,

which betokens Suburbs: For it led to the Suburbs, that is, that Part of the City which was called *Millo*. Which was the Valley at the west-end of Mount *Moriah*, in which *Jerusalem*, and *Sion* met: Replenished with Buildings in *David's* and *Solomon's* Time, 2 *Sam.* v. 9. 1 *Kings* xi. 27. See Dr. *Lightfoot* in his *Survey of the Temple*, Chap. v. Sect. 2.

Ver. 19. *These are the Divisions of the Porters among the Sons of Kore, and among the Sons of Merari.*] These Courses were made up of the Levites, of these two great Families.

Ver. 20. *And of the Levites, Abijah was over the Treasures of the House of God, and over the Treasures of the dedicated Things.*] By the Treasures of the House of God, are meant such things as were of ordinary Use and Employment in the Temple: Such as the Vessels, Vestments, Tithes, Wine, Oil, and other Things, that were commonly used. Together with such, as were offered to the Treasury; either as a due (as was the half Shekel) or voluntarily, as Money or Vessels, for the Repair of the House of God, and Advancement of the Service there. By the Treasures of dedicated Things are meant whatsoever their Kings, or great Commanders had consecrated and dedicated for Divine Uses: Which lay as a Stock for the Temple, and Monuments of their Devotion.

Ver. 21. *As concerning the Sons of Laadan: the Son of the Gershonite Laadan, chief Fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite, were Jebieli.*] This was an eminent Man of that Family. See xxiii. 7.

Ver. 22. *The Son of Jebieli; Zetham, and Joel his Brother,*] See xxiii. 8. where he is called *Jehiel*.

Which were over the Treasures of the House of the LORD.] From hence Dr. *Lightfoot* gathers, that as some of the Treasures of the House of God were under the Care and Charge of the Porters; (see ix. 26.) So the rest, and the Treasures of dedicated Things, were committed to the Care and Charge of other Levites, who were neither Porters, nor Singers.

Ver. 23. *Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites.*] Several Persons of these Families were employed as they that are mentioned in the foregoing Verse.

Ver. 24. *And Shebuel the Son of Gershom, the Son of Moses, was Ruler of the Treasures.*] This is the sole Honour, that we read of hitherto, conferred upon any of the Posterity of *Moses*. One of which was advanced to a great Authority, being the Overseer of all the Treasures, and their Officers. By *Treasures*, I suppose, is here meant those of the House of the Lord; for another was over the dedicated Things, v. 26.

Ver. 25. *And his Brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his Son, and Jesaiab his Son, and Jeram his Son, and Zickri his Son, and Shelomith his Son.*] These, I suppose, were under *Shebuel*, as their chief Ruler.

Ver. 26. *Which Shelomith and his Brethren, were over all the Treasures of the dedicated Things.*] Here is another of *Moses* his Posterity (by his younger Son) preferred to a great Office: To have the Charge of those Things which were dedicated for the Service of God, in which his Brethren were to assist him.

Which

Which David the King,] Out of his great Piety, had dedicated in Abundance, to the Building of the Temple, xxii. 14.

And the chief Fathers, the Captains over thousands and hundreds,] Such as by the Counsel of *Jethro* (*Exod* xviii.) were constituted to assist in the Government of the People.

And the Captains of the Host had dedicated.] The great Military Men, imitated the Rulers in the Civil Government, in this Piety. Or such as are called *Captains of the Host*, xxv. 1.

Ver. 27. *Out of the Spoils won in Battles, did they dedicate to maintain the House of the LORD.]* As *David* gave a vast Treasure to the Building of the House; so these Men dedicated a Part of their Spoil, to the Support and Repair of it, as there should be Occasion, after it was built.

Ver. 28. *And all that Samuel the Seer, and Saul the Son of Kish, and Abner the Son of Ner, and Joab the Son of Zeruiah had dedicated,]* He mentions particularly some great Benefactors; to honour their Memory, and to be Examples to Posterity. And *Samuel* seems to have begun, and led the Way to the rest that followed. For he, I suppose, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foresaw the Nation would be so well settled in the Land, that an House would be built, for the Service of God. And therefore he dedicated Part of the Spoils, which he got, in the Battles he fought, while he was Judge of the People of *Israel*. Which Example, *Saul*, *Abner*, and *Joab* imitated. And they all took it from the ancient Piety of the great Patriarch *Abraham*; who gave the Tenth of the Spoils which he won to *Melchisedech* God's High-Priest. The like did the Princes of the People of *Israel*, alter their Victory over the *Midianites*; as we read *Numb*. xxxi.

And whosoever had dedicated any thing,] There were many, no doubt, who were disposed to the same Piety besides these named.

It was under the Hand of Shelomith, and of his Brethren.] He was a Man of eminent Probity and Prudence: Otherwise so great a Trust would not have been reposed in him.

Ver. 29. *Of the Izharites, Chenaiab, and his Sons were for the outward Business,]* That is, the Business, without the City of *Jerusalem*; which neither belonged to the Singers, nor the Porters, whose Business was within the City. But what this *outward Business* was; is not easily resolved. *Kimchi*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors, think, it was to cut down Trees in the Woods, and to hew Stones, and to see the Fields plough'd, and the Vineyards and Gardens planted and dressed, which by devout Persons had been dedicated to the Service of God. But there doth not seem to be any thing belonging to such Matters, in these Words. For tho' *Shoterim* or Officers, might possibly have something to do in such Matters; yet what Business there was in these Things for the Judges (on whom these Officers attended) none can imagine. And this *outward Business* being over *Israel*, as it here follows, it does not denote their Care of the Fruits consecrated by the *Israelites*, nor the Government of those who gathered those Fruits: But some Authority over the *Israelites* themselves; such as is described

in the following Verse. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 26. whose Opinion is approved by *Conringius*: Which is, that they were *Assessors* with the ordinary Judges.

Over Israel,] Not over all the People of *Israel*, but over a Part of them: For those about *Jordan* were under another Jurisdiction, as appears by the next Verse.

For Officers and Judges.] For such Employments as are mentioned in the following Verse.

Ver. 30. *And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his Brethren, Men of Valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were Officers among them of Israel on this Side Jordan Westward,]* This was a vast Number: Therefore their Officers were of several sorts, (as it follows) not only in Divine, but in Civil Affairs.

In all Business of the LORD, and in the Service of the King.] The Work or Business of the LORD, was to take Care of all Things belonging to Religion: Among which Divine Employments, no doubt, this was the Chief, to judge the People according to the Law of God; and to see their Sentence put in Execution. For their Judges judged for the LORD, as *Jehoshaphat* tells them, 2 *Chron.* xix. 6. And they had Officers, called *Shoterim*, to see their Judgment take Effect. But the Word *Shoterim* doth not signify merely the Ministers of the Judges: But also such Persons who had some Ministry committed to them; to correct Offenders, and to punish them; or to bring them before the Judges to be punished by them. For they are not only joined with Judges (as I have often before observed) but frequently put before them in this Book. And therefore it is hard to find one Word to comprehend the whole Work of these Officers: Who were employed both in Peace and in War, as our learned *Nicolas Fuller* observes in his *Miscellanies*, Lib. ii. Cap. 20.

As for the Business of the King, some think, it was the gathering his Tribute, or perhaps publishing his Orders and Commands, and the like. See *Grotius de Jure Sum. Pot. circa Sacra*, p. 390.

Ver. 31. *Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the Generations of their Fathers.]* He was the principal Person among the Sons of *Hebron*, as we find before, xxiii. 19.

In the fortieth Year of the Reign of King David, they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty Men of Valour, at Jazer in Gilead.] In the last Year of King *David's* Reign, not only these Things mentioned in this Chapter were established; but all the other Ordinances which we read of in the foregoing, as the *Hebrew* Commentators observe. And his Care extended itself to the utmost Parts of his Dominion, where he sought for Men fit to be put into these Offices, on the other Side of *Jordan*: And found many Persons of great Courage at *Jazer in Gilead*, and the Territory belonging to it; among whom *Jerijah* was the Chief: *Jazer* was a City given to the Children of *Merari*, *Josh.* xxi. 39.

Ver. 32. *And his Brethren, Men of Valour, were two thousand seven hundred chief Fathers, whom David made Rulers over the Reubenites,*
the

the Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manasseh,] This was a great Number, to be employed in so small a Country; when on the other Side of *Jordan* (besides those under *Chenaiah*) there were but one thousand and seven hundred. But the Reason was, that they lived a great Way from *Jerusalem*; and therefore needed more to inspect, and admonish them of their Duty; lest they should forget their Relation to the Temple, or grow sluggish in the Worship of God, or embrace the Religion of their Neighbours; as *Pellicanus* observes.

For every Matter pertaining to God, and Affairs of the King.] It was the more necessary, there should be such a Number of Officers among them; to keep them in their Obedience to the King, as well as in their Duty to God. For there was Danger of their Desertion from their Sovereign, who lived at a great Distance, and was separated from them by the River *Jordan*. And nothing could be more pernicious, as he likewise observes, than the Rending of the Kingdom, and Neglect of the Divine Service.

From these Words it appears very plainly, as *Joannes Vorstius* notes, (in his Dissertation *de Synedriis Hebræorum*, Sect. 36.) that the same Persons took Care of the Things, or Causes pertaining to God, and those concerning the King. For nothing hindred, that one and the same College of Judges might judge both kind of Things, whether Spiritual, as we distinguish, or Civil. And he thinks, no Interpretation of the Things of God, and the Things of the King, is so probable, as that which I have given before: That by the Things of God, are meant such Things as might be judged by the Divine Law; and the Things of the King, such as could not be determined by the Law, but were left to the Judgment of the King. Who could not abrogate the ancient Laws, being bound to study the Book of the Law all the Days of his Life (*Deut. xvii.*) and judge according to it. But all Things being not there defined, or not so clearly and plainly that they could be determined by those Laws, the King, or those whom he intrusted in his stead, gave Sentence in such Matters: And could make new Laws, provided they did not contradict the old.

C H A P. XXVII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW the Children of Israel after their Number, to wit, the chief Fathers and Captains of thousands and hundreds, and their Officers, that served the King in any Matter of the Courses, which came in and went out Month by Month, throughout all the Months of the Year, of every Course were twenty and four thousand.] After the Settlement of Ecclesiastical Affairs, here is an Account given, how the Militia, as we may call it, of the Kingdom was settled in such Order, that it might be serviceable. They were distributed into XII Legions, consisting each of twenty four thousand Men; who were commanded by one of the Chief of the Fathers: Under whom there were Captains of thousands, such as we now call Colonels, which were twenty four in every Legion commanding a thousand Men. And then Centurions under them, or Captains of hundreds; and under them inferior

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Officers. Each of these Generals attended, with the Legions, one Month for the Security of the King and Kingdom: At the End of which they marched off, and another Legion, with their General, succeeded. So that their Course came but once in a Year, for one Month, which made it no considerable Burthen to them: There being so many valiant Men then in the Nation, that without much Damage such a Number might be in Arms, for so short a Season. *Pellicanus* thinks, this Order was instituted in the Beginning of *David's* Reign, but was interrupted by many Wars he had abroad; and not renewed till his last Years, when he established it again, and left his Kingdom to *Solomon* thus governed. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 133. who observes, that after this, we never read of the *Cherethites* and *Peletites*; these Troops being settled in their room.

Ver. 2. Over the first Course for the first Month, was *Jashobeam* the Son of *Zabdiel*: and in his Course were twenty and four thousand.] Now he sets down the Names of the chief Commander of every Legion: And *Jashobeam* seems to have been the first of his mighty Men, mentioned xi. 11. 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.

Ver. 3. Of the Children of *Perez*, was the chief of all the Captains of the Hosts for the first Month.] The fore-named *Jashobeam* was of the Children of *Pharez*, the Son of *Judah*: Which Tribe had the Honour to have the first chief Commander chosen out of it.

Ver. 4. And over the Course of the second Month, was *Dodai*, an *Abobite*, and of his Course was *Mikloth* also the Ruler: in his Course likewise were twenty and four thousand.] This *Dodo* (as he is called in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9.) was another of *David's* mighty Men: Who had for his Lieutenant (when he was absent) *Mikloth*; who, we may suppose, is therefore here mentioned, because he was a Person of great Eminence, and had some considerable Command in this Course.

Ver. 5. The third Captain of the Host for the third Month, was *Benaiah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, a chief Priest:] Or rather, a chief Prince, as the Hebrew Word *Cohen* often signifies. See upon 2 Sam. viii. 18. xx. 26. For it is certain, neither *Benaiah*, nor his Father were High-Priests, or second Priests; but *Abiathar* and *Zadok* were in those Offices.

And in his Course were twenty and four thousand.

Ver. 6. This is that *Benaiah*, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty:] He was one of *David's* Worthies, who had done such mighty Acts, that this Divine Writer did not think fit here to mention him, without a Mark of Honour set upon him. See 2 Sam. xxiii. 20, 23.

And in his Course was *Ammizabad* his Son.] He was his Deputy, when his Father could not attend this Duty himself; having another Office of great Dignity, wherein he served, as Captain of the *Cherethites* and *Peletites*, 2 Sam. viii. 18. Of whom, I observed before, we never read after the Time of *David*: But 'tis likely were kept up while they lived, tho' there was no need of them, after these Courses were settled.

Ver. 7. The fourth Captain for the fourth Month, was *Shabel* the Brother of *Joab*,] This confirms

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Pellicanus his Opinion, that *David* instituted these Courses in the Beginning of his Reign: For *Asabel* was killed while *David* reigned in *Hebron*, before he was King over all *Israel*, and settled at *Jerusalem*. He also was one of *David's* Worthies, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 24.

And *Zebadiah* his Son after him.] He had the Honour to succeed his Father in this great Command, when he was slain.

Ver. 8. The fifth Captain for the fifth Month, was *Shamhuth* the *Izrahite*, &c.] It is very probable, that this was that valiant Man called *Shammah*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 11. and *Shammath* in this Book, xi. 27.

Ver. 9. The sixth Captain for the sixth Month, was *Ira* the Son of *Ikkezh* the *Tekoite*, &c.] He is mentioned among the thirty mighty Men in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 26. and in this Book, c. xi. 28.

Ver. 10. The seventh Captain for the seventh Month, was *Helez* the *Pelonite* of the Children of *Ephraim*, &c. He is called the *Paltite* in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 26. and for the Honour of that Tribe, he is said here to be of the Children of *Ephraim*.

Ver. 11. The eighth Captain for the eighth Month, was *Sibbecai* the *Hushathite* of the *Zarhites*, &c.] One of that Family that was eminent in the Tribe of *Judah*, descended from *Caleb*, ii. 53. He slew one of the Sons of the Giant, in a Battle with the *Philistines*, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 18.

Ver. 12. The ninth Captain for the ninth Month, was *Abiezer* the *Anetothite*, of the *Benjamites*.] He also is mentioned among the thirty mighty Men in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 27.

Ver. 13. The tenth Captain for the tenth Month, was *Maharai* the *Netophathite* of the *Zarhites*, &c.] One of the same mighty Men, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 28.

Ver. 14. The eleventh Captain for the eleventh Month, was *Benaiah* the *Pirathonite*, of the Children of *Ephraim*.] Who is also there mentioned, v. 36. but here it is added of what Tribe he was.

Ver. 15. The twelfth Captain for the twelfth Month, was *Heldai* the *Netophathite*, of *Othniel*, &c.] He is called *Heleb* in this Book, Chap. xi. 30. and *Heleb* in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 29.

Ver. 16. Furthermore, over the Tribes of *Israel*.] Besides the twelve great Captains before mentioned, who commanded, each of them, twenty and four thousand Men; every Tribe had a Ruler, (who are called the *Princes of the Tribes of Israel*, ver. 22.) who had the chief Authority among them, under the King.

The Ruler of the *Reubenites* was *Eliezer* the Son of *Zichri*: of the *Simeonites*, *Shephatiah* the Son of *Maachab*.] He reckons up the Tribes in Order according to their Birth-right, by *Leah*.

Ver. 17. Of the *Levites*, *Hashabiah* the Son of *Kemuel*.] He is mentioned before, xxvi. 30.

Of the *Aaronites*, *Zadok*.] They were not a distinct Tribe, but of a distinct Order, from the rest of the *Levites*: And therefore had a peculiar Chief to preside over them, viz. *Zadok*. Who (as *Bertram* thinks) had the chief Authority at the Tabernacle in *Gibeon*, as *Abiathar* had at *Jerusalem*, where the Ark was.

Ver. 18. Of *Judah*, *Elihu* one of the Brethren of *David*.] Called *Eliab* in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 6.

Of *Issachar*, *Omri* the Son of *Michael*.] He was the fifth Son of *Leah*, and therefore is reckoned next to *Judah*, who was the fourth, *Gen.* xxx. 17, 18.

Ver. 19. Of *Zebulun*, *Ismaiah* the Son of *O-badiab*.] He was the next Son of *Leah*, *Gen.* xxx. 20.

Of *Naphtali*, *Jerimoth* the Son of *Azriel*.] Tho' *Dan* was the First-born of *Bilhah*, (*Gen.* xxx. 6.) yet that Tribe is put last, and *Naphtali*, who was the next Son, put before him. For what Reason we cannot tell.

Ver. 20. Of the Children of *Ephraim*, *Hoshea* the Son of *Azaziah*: of the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Joel* the Son of *Pedaiab*.] This is meant of that half Tribe, which had its Portion on this Side *Jordan*, near to *Ephraim*.

Ver. 21. Of the half Tribe of *Manasseh* in *Gilead*.] On the other Side *Jordan*, where the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* were.

Iddo the Son of *Zechariah*.] It doth not appear of what Family he was, but it is likely, one of that Tribe.

Of *Benjamin*, *Jaaziel* the Son of *Abner*.] It seems, the Family of *Abner*, who was the greatest Man in the Kingdom of *Israel*, continued in high Authority after his Death.

Ver. 22. Of *Dan*, *Azareel* the Son of *Jerobam*. These were the Princes of the Tribes of *Israel*.] That is, of those Tribes before-mentioned. But *Gad* and *Asser* are omitted, of which we can give no certain Account. Perhaps they were under the Government of the Ruler of some neighbouring Tribe. For *Asser* dwelling in very narrow Bounds between *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, might be under the Command of him that governed either of them: And *Gad*, some think, was comprehended under the *Reubenites*.

Ver. 23. But *David* took not the Number of them] That is, of *Israel*, whom he had spoken of before.

From twenty Years old and under:] But only of those who were above the Age of twenty Years.

Because the LORD had said he would increase *Israel* like to the Stars of the Heavens.] This was the Reason, *Pellicanus* thinks, that God was so angry with *David* for numbring the People: Which he had promised should be so many, that they should not be numbred. Which Promise God would have to be believed, without attempting to prove the Truth of it. But these Words seem to me, to confute that Opinion: For they rather signify, that *David* forbore to number all the People, because he would not question that Promise, and contented himself with an Account of those that were fit to go to War, xxi. 4. See my Notes upon 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10.

Ver. 24. *Joab* the Son of *Zeruiah* began to number, but he finished not,] For he did not number those of *Levi* and *Benjamin*; as we read before in this Book, c. xxi. 6.

Because there fell Wrath for it against *Israel*.] This seems to import, that before *Joab* had finished his Account, the Plague began; which put a Stop to his Proceedings.

Neither was the Number put in the Account of the Chronicles of King *David*.] An Account of the

the Number as far as he went, was given by *Joab* to the King: But the King being sensible of his Error, would not have it recorded in the Publick Registers of the Kingdom, as other Things of daily Occurrence were. Yet the Memory of it is preserved in these holy Books, to teach all Posterity not to put their Trust in the Arm of Flesh.

Ver. 25. *And over the King's Treasure was Azmaveth the Son of Adiel: and over the Store-houses in the Fields, in the Cities, and in the Villages, and in the Castles, was Jebonathan the Son of Uzziab.*] The former of these was the principal Officer in the Exchequer, as we now speak, who received the King's Money from the Under-Officers, and was accountable for it; and lived at *Jerusalem*, where he issued it out, according to the King's Orders. But there was another in the Country out of *Jerusalem*, who received the Tribute of all Kinds, which the People were to pay him: Which he laid up in Store-houses, that were built in several Places for that Purpose.

Ver. 26. *And over them that did the Work of the Field for Tillage of the Ground, was Ezri the Son of Chelub.*] Beside the Tribute paid by the People of Corn, Wine, Oil, &c. the King had Land of his own; where he kept Servants to till the Ground. And this Person was set over them, to see they were not idle, and that they were honest in gathering the Fruits of the Earth, and sending them to the Store-houses.

Ver. 27. *And over the Vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite:*] He looked after the Vine-dressers.

Over the Increase of the Vineyards, for the Wine-Cellars, was Zabdi the Shiphmite.] His Office was to see the Wine pressed out of the Grapes, and carried into the Cellars; where it was laid up.

Ver. 28. *And over the Olive-trees, and the Sycomore-trees that were in the low Plains, was Baal-hanan the Gederite:*] This shews, that *David* was a great Husband, as we speak, and had Ground proper for all Sort of Fruits; which was managed by his own Servants. For, as I have often observed, the greatest Men in those Times studied the Improvement of their Ground of what Sort soever it was.

And over the Cellars of Oil was Joash.] It appears from many Places, that a great Part of their Revenue lay in Oil: Which requir'd great Care, as Wine did, in the looking after it.

Ver. 29. *And over the Herds that fed in Sharon, was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the Herds that were in the Valleys, was Shaphat the Son of Adlai.*] He had great Store of Cattle also in his Pastures, particularly in *Sharon*, which was a Place noted for its Fruitfulness, as we read in the Prophet *Isaiab*, Chap. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. And so St. *Hierom* testifies, *Omnis Regio Saron*, &c. all the Region of *Saron*, about *Lidda*, *Joppa*, and *Jannia*, was apt for feeding of Flocks. See *Isaiab* lxxv. 10. There was another *Saron* besides this near the *Mediterranean*, which was in the East beyond *Jordan*, (as I observed upon c. v. 16. of this Book) where the *Gadites* inhabited, who abounded in Cattle: And therefore were planted by *Moses* in this Region, and in *Bashan*, which was another rich Country for

Pasture. See *L'Empereur* upon *Bava Kama*. And therefore here *David*, it is likely, bred a great many Cattle, both in the Mountains, and in the Valleys; and had particular Officers, to look after them, they being very many. For here, as he observes out of *Maimonides*, there were great Numbers of Calves bred, which Women had the Care of, and were brought from hence to other Places, to be sold.

Ver. 30. *Over the Camels also, was Obil the Ishmeelite:*] An *Ishmeelite* was the fittest Person to look after the Breed of Camels, because that Country abounded with them, and they best understood their Nature. And this Person seems to have had his Name from his Office. For as *Ibil*, in *Arabick* signifies a Camel, so *Abal* and *Abil*, a Keeper of Camels: As *Bochart* notes in his *Hierozyicon*, P. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 2.

And over the Asses, was Jekhdeiah the Meronathite.] This was a great Part of Men's Riches in old Times; for we find *Ana*, feeding his Father's Asses in *Gen.* xxxvi. 24. In which Book we find them reckoned among the Wealth of the antient Patriarchs. And the *Israelites* took no less than threescore and one thousand of them from the *Midianites*, *Num.* xxxi. 34. And in this Book we read of two thousand taken from the *Hagarens*, c. v. 21. And when the *Jews* returned out of the Captivity of *Babylon*, they were become so rich that they brought away with them six thousand seven hundred and twenty Asses; as *Nehemiah* relates c. vii. 69.

Ver. 31. *And over the Flocks, was Jaziz the Hagarite. All these were the Rulers of the Substance which was King David's.*] The Flocks of Sheep, no doubt, were very numerous, but among all the Flocks and Herds there is no mention made of Swine, as *Bochartus* observes. Nor had the Patriarchs any, that we read of when mention is made of their Possessions. Nor had *Job* any in *Arabia*, tho' he had a vast Number of other Cattle. Nor did the *Israelites* ever take any of these, as Spoil from their Enemies. And therefore *Gadara*, where Swine were kept in *Judea* (as we read in the Gospel) was a *Greek* City, not a *Jewish*, as *Josephus* tells us. See *Hierozyicon*, P. i. Lib. i. Cap. 51.

Ver. 32. *Also Jonathan, David's Uncle, was a Counsellor, a wise Man, and a Scribe:*] He was one of the Privy-Council; being a Man of great Wisdom, and also skilful in the Law; for so the Word *Sopher* (which we render *Scribe*) signifies. A very learned Author thinks it signifies a Secretary of State, or rather a Chancellor.

And Jebiel the Son of Hachmoni, was with the King's Sons.] He also, no doubt, was a Man of great Understanding, being a Tutor, as we speak, or Governor to the King's Sons.

Ver. 33. *And Abithophel was the King's Counsellor, and Hushai the Archite was the King's Companion.*] *Abithophel* seems to have been President of the Council: But *Hushai* was his Favourite (being called *David's Friend*) in whose Company he most delighted, and whom he trusted with his greatest Secrets.

Ver. 34. *And after Abithophel, was Jechoiada the Son of Benaiah, and Abiathar:*] After *Abithophel* had made away himself, these two were the principal Counsellors; as *Kimchi* and other *Jewish* Doctors understand these Words. But

others think, the Meaning is, that next to him these two were accounted the ablest Men that *David* advised withal: But *after him*, for he was esteemed the Man of greatest Prudence.

And the General of the King's Army was Joab.] The *Targum* hath a strange Exposition of this Verse, which is this; When there was War to be made, they consulted *Abithophel*, and after that they asked Counsel of *Urim* and *Thummim* by *Jehoiada*, the Head of the *Sanhedrin*; and by *Abiathar* the High-Priest: And so the *Cherubites* and *Peletbites* by the Authority of *Urim* and *Thummim*, went to fight under the Command of *Joab*, the General of the Army. In the Exposition of which there are a great many foolish Descants, which I shall not mention.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND David assembled all the Princes of Israel, the Princes of the Tribes,]* These seem to be the same, one being the Explication of the other: And they are those Persons mentioned ver. 16, 17, &c. of the foregoing Chapter.

And the Captains of the Companies that ministered to the King by Course,] That is, those great Commanders, over four and twenty thousand a-piece, mentioned in the beginning of the foregoing Chapter.

And the Captains over the thousands, and Captains over the hundreds,] The Commanders of every one of those thousands, with the Centurions who commanded the several Companies, consisting of an hundred.

And the Stewards over all the Substance and Possession of the King, and of his Sons,] Who are mentioned also in ver. 25, 26, &c. of the foregoing Chapter: And appear by this to have been considerable Persons.

With the Officers,] Who were about his Person.

And with the mighty Men, and with all the valiant Men,] Those who were eminent for their Services in War, of whom he had spoken in Chap. xi. and xii.

Unto Jerusalem.] All these he called to attend him in the chief City of the Kingdom, that he might commend *Solomon* to them as his Successor, and this Government which he^d had settled. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 150. This seems to have been a distinct Assembly from that mentioned c. xxiii. 2. being more general, and consisting of many Persons, who were not then in such Offices, as are here named.

Ver. 2. *Then David the King stood upon his Feet, and said,]* He was sitting in his Throne, I suppose, when they came in, but then stood up in Respect to so great an Assembly, and that he might be the better heard. When he first declared *Solomon* to be his Successor, and caused him to be anointed, he lay upon his Bed, being very Palsick and Decrepit, as we read 1 Kings i. But intending now to have him anointed again, in the midst of his Princes, and great Commanders (c. xxix. 22.) whom he could not assemble, when on a sudden he commanded him to be anointed before: He roused

up himself, and rose from his Couch, and came out of his Chamber, and made Orations, and gave Advice for Things to come, as *Dr. Lightfoot* observes.

Hear me, my Brethren, and my People,] He calls the great Men his Brethren, both because they had a Share in the Government with him, and to express his Affection to them. 'Tis likely they were attended by some other Persons, whom he calls *my People*.

I had in mine Heart to build an House of Rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD,] A fixed Place, where the Ark might be settled, and not carried about, as it had been hitherto, 2 Sam. vii. 1.

And for the Footstool of our God,] Here the Conjunction *and*, as our *Mr. Mede* observes, is *exegetical*, and the same with, *that is*: According to which Expression the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *Lament.* ii. 1. that the LORD had cast down the Beauty of Israel, and remembred not his Footstool, (that is, the Ark of the Covenant, which was their Glory) *in the Day of his Anger*, Book I. p. 500. For the Divine Glory, sitting upon the Wings of the Cherubims, over the Mercy Seat (*Psal.* lxxx. 2.) his Feet, as we speak after the Manner of Men, rested upon the Ark. And therefore the *Targum* thus paraphrases it, *The Footstool of the Throne of Glory*. And thence it is sometimes called, *The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of Hosts, who sitteth upon the Cherubims*, 1 Sam. iv. 4.

And had made ready for the Building.] Laid up great Treasures, which he designed to defray the Charges of the Building. See chap. xxii.

Ver. 3. *But God said unto me,]* In the *Targum*, the *Memra*, WORD of the LORD.

Thou shalt not build an House for my Name, because thou hast been a Man of War, and hast shed Blood.] See my *Notes* upon Chap. xxii. 8. To which I shall here add, that Bloodshed was accounted a Thing so heinous, that tho' one had killed another only accidentally, yet he was bound to flee for it to a City of Refuge, or else he might have been killed himself. And among the ancient *Greeks* (as *Petitus* shews in his Book of the *Attick Laws*, L. vii. p. 512.) he that killed another involuntarily, was banished from his Country for a Year. But *David* is here forbidden to build God a Temple, merely because he had been engaged in War and Bloodshed, tho' it was on a pious Account. And thus also among the ancient *Greeks* (as *Grotius* observes) they stood in need of an Expiation, who without any Blame had defiled their Hands in Blood. And accordingly among the *Greek Christians* there was a *Canon*, long observed in that Church, which kept Men from the Holy Communion for a Time, who had killed an Enemy in any War. See L. ii. *De Jure Belli, & Pacis*, cap. xxv. sect. 9. But *Oslander*, considering this Passage in *Grotius*, thinks, that in these Words, *David's* Warring and Bloodshed is not alledged, *ratione alicujus vitii*, &c. upon the Account of any Blemish, which hindered him from building a House for God, but merely upon the Account of the vast Business wherein he was engaged: For being employed continually in warlike Actions, he was not at leisure for such a Building; which was

was to be the Work of Peace and Quietness. *David* also is expressly said to have managed the Wars of the LORD, being but his Instrument to punish the Enemies of his People *Israel*. And therefore could not be blemished by being thus employed to God, nor made incapable thereby to build his Temple. For he gloried and triumphed in these Wars and in the Victories he got: For which he sung Praise to God, *Psal* lx. Add to all this, that the Account which *Solomon* gives to *Hiram*, why his Father did not build God an House, was that he was otherwise employed, 1 *Kings* v. 3. But I leave this to better Judgments.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the House of my Father, to be King over Israel for ever:]* See 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13. *Psal.* lxxviii. 68.

For he hath chosen Judah to be the Ruler:] See *Gen.* xlix. 10.

And of the House of Judah, the House of my Father; and among the Sons of my Father, he liked me, to make me King over all Israel.] For till his Days it was not known out of what Family of *Judah* a King should be chosen, from whom the MESSIAH should come.

Ver. 5. *And of all my Sons (for the LORD hath given me many Sons) he hath chosen Solomon my Son, to sit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the LORD over Israel.]* For he was beloved of God from his Birth, 2 *Sam.* xii. 25. and plainly designed by God to be his Successor, 2 *Sam.* vii. 13. and here in this Book, c. xxii. 9. So that *David* sware he should reign after him, and accordingly performed it, 1 *Kings* i. 17, 35. This he declares now to them all, when he was going out of the World: That they might reverence *Solomon* as a Person placed upon the Throne by Divine Appointment; and not out of any partial and fond Affection of his to him, preferred before his elder Brethren.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, Solomon thy Son he shall build my House, and my Courts: for I have chosen him to be my Son, and I will be his Father.]* See 2 *Sam.* vii. 13. and this Book, c. xxii. 9.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I will establish his Kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my Commandments, and my Judgments, as at this Day.]* The last Words import, that hitherto *Solomon* was very towardly (as we speak) and gave great Hopes he would continue steadfast in his Obedience to God, as his Father *David* had done.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore in the Sight of all Israel the Congregation of the LORD,]* Who were here present by their Representatives: To whom he now addresses his Speech, that they might give the same Exhortation to their Neighbours.

And in the Audience of our God,] Who was present in all their publick Assemblies, as I have noted upon *Judges* xx. 1. See there.

Keep, and seek for all the Commandments of the LORD your God:] It is not enough to know the Will of God, if we do not keep it; that is, observe his Commands, and live in the Practice of our Duty. But that we may know it, it is necessary to seek it; that is, to enquire after it, and study the Laws of God. For no Man (as

Grotius here observes) shall be excused by a supine Ignorance.

That ye may possess this good Land, and leave it for an Inheritance for your Children after you for ever.] It was in vain to expect the Continuance of God's Favour to them; who had brought them into this good Land, unless they continued steadfast in his Obedience. This was the only Way to Settlement in their Possessions.

Ver. 9. *And thou, Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father,]* To know God is, in Scripture Language, to acknowledge and love him. As God is said to know the Way of the Righteous; that is, to approve and love it, *Psal.* i. ult. *Solomon* had the greater Reason to do this, because God had been so very gracious to his Father *David*, and chosen him, before all his Brethren, to be his Successor.

And serve him with a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind:] His Love was to be expressed by Obedience to God, and that intirely and cheerfully: Out of Choice, not by Constraint; not to gain the good Opinion of Men, but the Favour of God. For hearty Piety, and not merely the outward Appearance of it, is the surest Support of a Prince's Power and Authority: And will dispose his Subjects to love and reverence him as sincerely, as he doth God.

For the LORD searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts:] He presses him with two Arguments unto Sincerity in his Obedience. The first is in these Words; because God cannot be deceived with external Services; for he looks into the Hearts, and discerns the most secret Motions there: Which cannot be hid from him, but is privy to every Thought, and to the very Beginning of them.

If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.] This is the other Argument; God is not tied to any Man, but upon Condition of his hearty Obedience. As he behaves himself towards God, so God will deal with him.

Ver. 10. *Take heed now, for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an House for the Sanctuary:]* That is, for the Ark to dwell in, for that was the principal Furniture of the Sanctuary. The Targum thus expresses it, The MEMRA, Word of the LORD hath chosen thee, &c.

Be strong and do it.] Being a young Man, he might be discouraged from undertaking so great Work: But he bids him go about it strenuously; because God had chosen him to do it.

Ver. 11. *Then David gave to Solomon his Son the Pattern of the Porch, and of the Houses thereof,]* *Abarbincl* is very confident that the Word *Ulam*, which we translate *Porch*, is a general Word used in this Place for the whole House. The Description of which *David* gave *Solomon*, with all the Apartments belonging to it: Especially of the Houses thereof, which were two: The Outward, called the Holy Place, and the Inward, called the Holy of Holies: Which were distinct Houses, being separated by a Partition: And accordingly the former is called the greater House, 2 *Chron.* iii. 5. being much larger in its Dimensions than the other. At the Entrance of which there was a Porch, the Model of which *David* gave him, as well as of the Houses.

And of the Treasuries thereof, and of the upper Chambers thereof, and of the inner Parlours thereof,] There were several Rooms against the Walls of the House round about, as we read *1 Kings vi. 5.* which are here called by several Names, according to the Use wherein they were employed. And the fore-named *Abarbinel* here observes, out of *Middoth* and *Tamid*, and other Books, that the Temple was built like an high Tower, reaching up to Heaven, there being three upper Stories one above another, and the first Story three times higher than that of *Moses*, viz. thirty Cubits.

And of the Place of the Mercy-Seat.] Where that should be placed, in the *Holy of Holies*.

Ver. 12. *And the Pattern of all that he had by the Spirit,]* in the Hebrew, *of all that he had in the Spirit with him: That is inspired into him.* It being an House for God to dwell in, it was fit that it should not be of a mere Human, but of a Divine Contrivance, as the Tabernacle built by *Moses* was. Therefore God suggested to *David* by his Spirit, how he would have it made in all the Parts before-mentioned, and in those that follow: For those Words refer to both. See ver. 19.

Of the Courts of the House of the LORD, and of all the Chambers round about,] How large the Courts should be, and how many, and what Rooms adjoining to them, was all ordered by a special Direction from God.

Of the Treasuries of the House of God, and of the Treasuries of the dedicate things.] From the last Words most are of Opinion, it may be concluded, that in these Places all the Utensils belonging to the Tabernacle which *Moses* made, and the Tabernacle itself (which was no longer used after *Solomon's* Temple was built) were laid up and preserved. By which perhaps was signified, as *Constantine L' Empereur* conjectures (upon *Middoth*, p. 87.) that all the Ceremonies of *Moses* should one Day be decently laid aside, and something better come in their Room.

Ver. 13. *Also for the Courses of the Priests, and the Levites, and for all the Work of the Service of the House of the LORD, and for all the Vessels of Service in the House of the LORD.]* He disposed of the Courses of the Priests and Levites (before-mention'd) by the same Spirit, and how they should be employed, and what Vessels they should use in God's Service.

Ver. 14. *He gave of Gold by weight, for Things of Gold, for all Instruments of all manner of Service; Silver also for all Instruments of Silver, by weight, for all Instruments of every kind of Service:]* He gave Materials also, in a just Proportion to the Instruments that were to be made, either of Gold or Silver.

Ver. 15. *Even the Weight for the Candlesticks of Gold, and for the Lamps of Gold, by weight for every Candlestick, and for the Lamps thereof: and for the Candlesticks of Silver by weight, both for the Candlestick, and also for the Lamps thereof, according to the Use of every Candlestick.]* By this we learn that there were Candlesticks of Silver, as well as of Gold. The former of which were lesser, to be carried in their Hands from place to place, as there was Occasion. But the latter were fixed in the Sanctuary, and in *Solomon's* House were ten in Number, *1 Kings vi. 49.*

Ver. 16. *And by weight he gave Gold for the Tables of Shew-bread for every Table, and likewise Silver for the Tables of Silver;]* There was but one Table for the Shew-bread: but there were several others attending upon it, whereon were set such Vessels as belonged to it. For as he made more Candlesticks than were in the Tabernacle; so, it appears by this, he also augmented the Tables, which were no less than ten, *2 Chron iv. 8.*

Ver. 17. *Also pure Gold for the Flesh-hooks, and the Bowls, and the Cups, and for the Golden Basons he gave Gold by weight for every Bason; and likewise Silver by Weight for every Bason of Silver:]* Assigning such a Portion of Gold or Silver to every Bason, as would make it as large as he proposed. Many of the Jews by the Hebrew Word *Kepuri* (which we translate *Basons*) understand *Spoons*, which had the Figure of Oxen and Lions on the Head of them; which they imagine was the Beginning of *Solomon's* Offence. But the Word rather imports some Vessel, wherein they received the Blood of the Sacrifice of Expiation.

Ver. 18. *And for the Altar of Incense, refined Gold by weight;]* It was covered with Gold, as the Cherubims were, *1 Kings vii. 49.*

And Gold for the Pattern of the Chariot of the Cherubims, that spread out their Wings, and covered the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.] It seems *David* contriv'd these two Cherubims, besides those which *Moses* had made. Of which see what I have noted upon *1 Kings vi. 23, 28.* They are called the Chariot, because God is said not only to sit, but to ride upon the Cherubims, (*Psal. xviii. 10.*) as the LORD of Hosts: And therefore they are described in *Ezekiel*, as having Wheels on which they ran. The other made by *Moses* were most properly his Seat, but these represented him as filling the whole House.

Ver. 19. *All this, said David, the LORD made me to understand in writing by his Hand upon me, even of the Work of this Pattern.]* God made him understand all this so plainly and distinctly, as if it had been written on his Mind, as the ten Commandments were upon the Tables of Stone in the Mount. But some of the Jews think the meaning is, that God revealed these Things first to some of the Prophets, *Samuel* (*iv. 22.*) or *Nathan*, or *Gad*, who delivered all to *David* in Writing, as the Mind of God. However it was, God was pleased thus himself to give Instructions about the Structure of the Temple, and all belonging to it; that it might breed in the People's Mind a greater Reverence, when they came to worship him there: And, as *Joseph de Voyson* observes, the Jews in *Beracoth* say, that their Minds might be lifted up when they came to the Temple, from earthly Things, to Things spiritual and celestial.

Ver. 20. *And David said to Solomon his Son, be strong, and of good Courage, and do it:]* He repeats what he had said before, ver. 10. the more to excite and encourage him to this Work, which was to do the Work of God.

Fear not, neither be dismayed, for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished

nished all the Work for the Service of the House of the LORD.] He thought that he might possibly fear Disturbance from Enemies abroad, of which *David* had a great many: But he bids him be confident, he should not be disquieted in his Work; which should go on prosperously, by the Blessing of God, till it was finished. Of which he might be the more assured, if he reflected how God had blessed *David* himself all his Life long.

Ver. 21. *And behold, the Courses of the Priests, and the Levites, even they shall be with thee, for all the Service of the House of God, and there shall be with thee for all Manner of Workmanship every willing skilful Man for any Manner of Service: also the Princes and all the People will be wholly at thy Commandment.]* It is a probable Conjecture of *Conradus Pellicanus*, that he now presented *Solomon* with a List of all the Courses of God's Ministers, as God had directed him to establish them: Assuring him, that God would dispose them to be serviceable unto him in all that he had to do, for the carrying on of the Work. Which should have the Help and Assistance of all other skilful Persons, whom he would make willing to further it: And that he would make all the Princes and the People obedient to him in all things. This was one Reason, no doubt, of calling this Assembly together, that they might be engaged to be aiding to *Solomon*, in promoting so pious a Work.

C H A P. XXIX.

Ver. 1. **F**urthermore, *David the King said unto all the Congregation, Solomon my Son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the Work is great: for the Palace is not for Man, but for the LORD God.]* He stirs them up to the Assistance of his Son, by these Considerations, That he was a Person chosen by God, not by him, for this Work: And yet he needed their Help, because he was but a Youth, (see 1 Kings iii. 7.) and the Work itself was to be very magnificent, suitable to the Majesty that was to dwell therein, viz. the LORD himself; who dwells not (as the Apostle speaks) in Temples made with Hands: But was present there by a glorious Light, which represented his Majesty.

Ver. 2. *Now I have prepared with all my Might, for the House of my God, the Gold for Things to be made of Gold, and the Silver for Things of Silver, and the Brass for Things of Brass, the Iron for Things of Iron, and Wood for Things of Wood; Onyx Stones, and Stones to be set, glistening Stones, and of divers Colours, and all Manner of precious Stones, and Marble Stones in abundance.]* We read of his great Preparation for this Building before, c. xxii. 14, &c. only nothing is said there concerning precious Stones: The Use of which in the Ornament of any Part of the Temple, is not known. *Ludolphus* speaking of the Word *Phuc*, which we translated glistening, saith, that as *David* provided all Things for the Fabrick of the Temple, so he provided for the Clothing of the Priests with rich Garments, and also with such Things as were good for bodily Health, as this was, which was not only κοσμητικόν, for Ornament, but θεραπευτικόν,

for Medicine and Preservation of Health. But perhaps *Phuc* being famous among those things which Women used for setting off their Beauty, it may possibly here be a metaphorical Word, for all such Stones as may set off the Building. See his *Commentary* upon the *Æthiopick History*, Lib. i. Cap. 7. N. 51.

Ver. 3. *Moreover, because I have set my Affection to the House of my God, I have of mine own proper Good, of Gold and Silver, which I have given to the House of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy House.]* Besides what he had devoted and dedicated to this Use, he gave, out of what remained for his own Occasions, a further Sum for the Building of the House; which is mentioned in the next Verse.

Ver. 4. *Even three thousand Talents of Gold, of the Gold of Ophir,]* The Gold of *Ophir* here mentioned, was that which came out of *Arabia*; where *Bochartus* hath proved, there was a Country of that Name abounding with Gold. For in *David's* Time the *Ophir* of *India* was not known, *Solomon* being the first that attempted a long Voyage thither. So we are to understand the Word *Ophir* in the Book of *Job*, xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. For in his Time they had not learned to traffick into those far distant Countries, where the other *Ophir* in *India* was. See my *Notes* upon 1 Kings ix. 18. This Gold here mentioned, was of a purer Sort than that in c. xxii. 14. which was coarser than the Gold of *Ophir*.

And seven thousand Talents of refined Silver, to overlay the Walls of the Houses withal.] There are two Things, which *Dr. Lightfoot* hath remarked in these two Verses. One is, that it is said, this Preparation was above what he had prepared for the holy House, and yet he saith he had prepared it for the House of God. The other is, That mention is made here of Silver to overlay the House withal: Whereas it is evident, that within the House itself, all the Overlaying was of Gold. Therefore it is thus to be understood, That besides the Store of Gold that *David* had provided for the gilding of the House, both in the holy and most holy Place; he had also laid by a Stock both of Gold and Silver, to gild the Chambers over the Porch, (for there were divers Upper-Chambers, the Height of it being an hundred and twenty Cubits) and to beautify the Side-Chambers, and the other Rooms that were about the Courts. All this Gold and Silver amounted to such a vast Sum of our Money, that it is not easy to give an Account of it. See *Calvisius ad Annum Mundi* 2933.

Ver. 5. *The Gold for Things of Gold, and the Silver for Things of Silver, and for all Manner of Work to be made by the Hands of Artificers.]* That there might be enough to pay all sort of Workmen their Wages, as well as to provide them Materials to work withal.

And who then is willing to consecrate his Service this Day unto the LORD?] The Hebrew Phrase to fill his Hand (as it is in the Margin) signifies to make an Offering: Unto which he excites them by his Example, as a thing which would be very grateful unto God.

Ver. 6. *Then the Chief of the Fathers and Princes of the Tribes of Israel, and the Captains of*

of thousands, and of hundreds, with the Rulers over the King's Work, offered willingly.] All those great Men, mentioned Chapter xxvii. made their cheerful Contributions.

Ver. 7. *And gave for the Service of the House of God, of Gold five thousand Talents, and ten thousand Drams; and of Silver ten thousand Talents; and of Brass, eighteen thousand Talents; and one hundred thousand Talents of Iron.]* What every particular Person gave is not here recorded: But the Whole amounted to these Sums, which was very great.

Ver. 8. *And they with whom precious Stones were found, gave them to the Treasure of the House of the LORD, by the Hand of Jehiel the Gershonite.]* For he and his Sons were Keepers of the Treasure of God's House, c. xxvi. 21, 22. and were appointed to receive such Offerings.

Ver. 9. *Then the People rejoiced, for that they offered willingly,]* They that made the Offering rejoiced; for they did it with a good Will, and not by Constraint.

Because with perfect Heart they offered willingly to the LORD:] This is the Virtue which St. Paul calls *ἀπλότης*, Singleness of Heart: Which hath Respect purely to the Service of God, the Honour of Religion, and the Good of his Church, 2 Corinth. viii. 2. ix. 11, 13.

And David the King also rejoiced with great Joy] It was a singular Comfort to him in his old Age, to see the People so well disposed, and his Exhortation so effectual upon their Heart: Which gave him a good Hope, this Work would not fail to be speedily accomplished.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the Congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever.]* All this he ascribed to the Grace of God; whom he therefore blessed and praised, for giving them such an Heart.

Ver. 11. *Thine, O LORD, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majesty: for all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth, is thine, thine is the Kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as Head above all.]* This is a most noble Declaration of the Sense he had of the Divine Excellencies and Perfections, with a thankful Acknowledgment of his Immensity, Power, Goodness, Eternity, and Majesty, which are the Properties or Attributes of God. The Targum, and the Talmudists, apply these to the wonderful Works of God, in this Manner, *Thine, O LORD, is the Greatness*, for thou createdst the World; *and the Power*, for thou broughtest our Fathers out of Egypt, and carriedst them thro' the Red Sea; and revealedst thyself in Glory upon Mount Sinai, to give the Law to thy People; and obtainedst Victory over Amalek, Sion, Og, and the Canaanites; and madest the Sun and the Moon stand still, *by the Spirit of thy Glory*, till thy People were vindicated of their Enemies. For all Things both in Heaven and in Earth, are the Work of thy Hands; thou supportest and rulest all Things; and thou art exalted above all the Angels in Heaven, as well as all the Kings upon Earth.

Ver. 12. *Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine Hand is*

Power and Might, and in thine Hand it is to make great, and to give Strength unto all.] The Targum thus paraphrases it; The Riches of the Wealthy, and the Glory of Kings and Dominions is given them by thee; thou rulest over all, and they are in thy Power: Who art able to multiply, and strengthen all Things; that is, to increase those to great Numbers who are diminished, and to strengthen those who are feeble and weak.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name.*

Ver. 14. *But who am I, and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?]* In the Targum it is thus paraphrased, *who hast given such Plenty, that we are able to offer these Gifts.* He should have added, and also given us an Heart to part with them for thy Service.

For all Things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.] We only return to thee what thine own Hand hath blessed us withal, as the Targum expresses it. And so the ancient Christians were wont to say at their Offertory, *τὰ σὰ ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν*, *thine from thine.* That is, thy own Goods from thy own People. In like Manner we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things; referring every good Thought, good Purpose, good Work, to his Divine Grace, from whom we receive it: Beseeching him, as David doth here in this Prayer, (v. 18.) to preserve it in us.

Ver. 15. *For we are Strangers before thee, and Sojourners, as were all our Fathers: our Days on the Earth are as a Shadow, and there is none abiding.]* He acknowledges that there were not Proprietors of that good Land wherein they dwelt but only his Tenants; who held all they had of him: And that but a very short Term; after which they must leave all as their Fathers had done. The Words may be thus paraphrased in short, *We have but the Use of these Things for a little while, and so have parted with no great Matter unto thee.* Those Words, *as a Shadow*, the Targum thus paraphrases. *As the Shadow of a Bird which flieth through the Air, so are our Days upon the Earth.* That is, soon gone, as the Psalmist speaks.

Ver. 16. *O LORD our God, all this Store that we have prepared, to build thee an House for thine holy Name, cometh of thine Hand, and is all thine own.]* He could not often enough repeat his Sense of this, that they had given him nothing but what was his own; which he had most bountifully bestowed on them.

Ver. 17. *I know also, my God, that thou triest the Heart, and hast Pleasure in Uprightness. As for me, in the Uprightness of mine Heart I have willingly offered all these Things.]* But the highest Satisfaction was, that God had bestowed upon him an Heart, to do what he had done willingly, with a sincere Respect to the Service of God, and not out of vain Glory. For the Truth of which he appeals to God himself, who could not be deceived with false Shews and Pretences.

And now have I seen with Joy, thy People which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.] It was a great additional Comfort to him, that God had given such a Heart unto his People.

Ver.

Ver. 18. O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our Father, keep this for ever in the Imagination of the Thoughts of the Heart of thy People, and prepare their Heart unto thee.] He could not desire a greater Blessing for them, than that he who had given them such a pious Heart, would preserve them in the same good Disposition: And confirm and establish them therein. So the last Words are better translated in the Margin, *establish their Heart unto thee.* Which the Targum paraphrases, *dispose their Heart to fear thee.*

Ver. 19. And give unto Solomon my Son a perfect Heart to keep thy Commandments, thy Testimonies, and thy Statutes, and to do all these Things, and to build the Palace for the which I have made Provision.] To have a due Respect to all God's Precepts (in the Observation of every one of which, *Perfection of Heart* consists) he knew would be the best Security for the performing what David designed. For then he would not be disobedient to his Father's dying Words.

Ver. 20. And David said to all the Congregation, Now bless the LORD your God. And all the Congregation blessed the LORD God of their Fathers, and bowed down their Heads, and worshipped the LORD and the King.] They worshipped both with the same Gesture, but with a different Mind; God with Religious Worship, the King with Civil: Giving God Thanks for all his Benefits, and thanking the King for all the Care he had taken, during his Reign, for their Prosperity. But some think, this Worship was not paid to David, but to Solomon; it being the Manner thus to acknowledge the King, when he was enthroned. So they bowed their Knees to our Saviour, in Mockery of him, as a pretended King.

Ver. 21. And they sacrificed Sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered Burnt-offerings unto the LORD on the Morrow after that Day,] For the Ark was now at Jerusalem, where this great Congregation was assembled, c. xxviii. 1. and therefore they offered Peace-offerings and Burnt-offerings to God in that Place, on the Morrow after their Meeting: For there was not time to do it on that Day, when the foregoing Things were done.

Even a thousand Bulls, a thousand Rams, and a thousand Lambs, with their Drink-offerings and Sacrifices in Abundance for all Israel:] That is, together with the numerous Burnt-offerings, a great many Peace-offerings (which are here meant by *Sacrifices*) sufficient for the Entertainment of all the Israelites, who were there present, to feast upon; as the Manner was, and as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 22. And did eat and drink before the LORD on that Day with great Gladness,] For the greatest Part of Peace-offerings were given to the Persons that offered them, to entertain their Friends withal, as hath been often observed. And they are said to eat and drink before the LORD, because it was a sacred Feast, kept before the Ark at Jerusalem, the Place which God had chosen, according to the Law, Deut. xii. 11, &c.

And they made Solomon the Son of David King the second time,] This is supposed to have been done after David's Death, when Solomon was

anointed for himself, as reigning *pleno Jure*, in Subjection to none: As he was anointed the first time by David's Command. But there are great Men of another Opinion; that he was twice anointed while David lived: First, in the Presence of a few of David's Servants, as we read 1 Kings i. and now, in the Presence of all the great Men of Israel, the Princes of the Tribes, Captains of Thousands and Hundreds. See Bertram de Repub. Jud. p. 130, 131. And indeed, we are led to this by the Connexion with the foregoing Words: For the Persons who now made him King the second time, were those before-mentioned, who sacrificed and feasted thereupon with great Joy: After David's long Speech to them. Dr. Lightfoot indeed observes, that there is mention three times of Solomon's being made King: Twice in this Book, c. xxiii. 1. and here in this Place: And in 1 Kings i. So that there may be a Question made, Whether he was made King three times, or only twice. But this Place seems to settle the Doubt; for when upon the Aspiring of Adonijah, he was anointed, it was the first time that David shewed who should succeed him. See 1 Kings i. 21, 27. and that must be concurrent, or the same with that making him King mentioned in this Book, c. xxiii. 1. and this anointing in the midst of the Princes and great Commanders, was the second time. Abarbinel is of the same Opinion, that he was anointed at first before a few; and now more publicly before the whole Nation.

And anointed him unto the LORD to be the chief Governor,] After the Death of David, who perhaps now resigned the Government of the Kingdom to him, finding he had not long to live.

And Zadok to be Priest.] This hath inclined many to think the anointing forementioned was after the Death of David: Because Abiathar was not put out of his Office till the beginning of Solomon's Reign. But I see no Reason why we may not think he was anointed to be Priest, as Solomon was to be King in David's Life-time: Tho' he was not actually put into the Office till after he was dead, when Abiathar was thrust out. It was necessary he should be anointed, because the Succession to the High-Priesthood, in the Line of Eleazar, had been long interrupted; and Abiathar of the Line of Ithamar was still alive. This Reason the Jews give why he was anointed; which was not necessary, they say, but in this Case: It being sufficient otherwise, only to cloath him with the Priestly Vestments. But see Selden de Success. in Pontif. L. ii. cap. 9. who will incline one to be of another Opinion.

Ver. 23. Then Solomon sat on the Throne of the LORD] So the Throne of this Kingdom is called, because this was God's Land, and Israel his People, over whom he still remained their King: And Solomon reigned over them, not by Inheritance, but by his special Appointment. The Targum thus expresses it, *He sat upon the Royal Throne, according to the Word of the MEMRA, WORD of the LORD.*

As King instead of David his Father, and prospered, and all Israel obeyed him.] From the beginning of his Reign, his People were all o-

bedient to him: Whereas, it was a long Time before *Saul* could be settled on his Throne; and it was longer before all *Israel* submitted to *David*.

Ver. 24. *And all the Princes and the mighty Men,*] All the Soldiery, as well as the Heads of the Tribes, and the great Commanders.

And all the Sons likewise of King David] Who were then alive.

Submitted themselves unto Solomon the King.] Swore Allegiance to him. For so the Hebrew Phrase signifies, *they gave the Hand under Solomon*. For putting the Hand under the Knee, or the Thigh of a Person, was a Token of Subjection to him: And was anciently used, when they solemnly promised any thing to a Superior, by an Oath, *Gen. xxiv. 2. c. xlvii. 29.* Which Custom, if it did not continue in Use in *Solomon's* Days, yet that which was signified by it, was expressed in the ancient Phrase.

Ver. 25. *And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the Sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such Royal Majesty, as had not been on any King before him in Israel.*] Which appears from the foregoing Books, which shew, that neither *David*, nor *Saul*, nor any of the Judges, (who governed before them) lived in such Splendor, as was in the Court of *Solomon*.

Ver. 26. *Thus David the Son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.*] That is, this is a brief Account of what *David* did during his Reign, especially in the latter End of it.

Ver. 27. *And the Time that he reigned over Israel, was forty Years; seven Years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three Years reigned he in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Sam. v. 5.

Ver. 28. *And he died in a good old Age, full of Days, Riches, and Honour:*] Abundantly satisfied, that he had lived long enough, in as great Plenty and Glory as he could desire.

And Solomon his Son reigned in his stead.] Having this particular Satisfaction, to see his Son sit on his Throne, likely to reign in greater Glory than he had done. This was the LORD's

doing, who disposes the Hearts of all the great Men, and his elder Brethren, and the whole Kingdom to submit to him, who was but a young Man.

Ver. 29. *Now the Acts of David the King first and last,*] A larger Account of all that he did, from the Beginning to the End of his Reign.

Behold, they are written in the Book of Samuel the Seer, and in the Book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the Book of Gad the Seer.] Here are three distinct Titles given to those three Persons: *Samuel* being called *Roeb*, and *Nathan* is called *Nabi*, and *Gad* is called *Chofeb*. But whether they have distinct Significations, denoting several Ways of receiving Divine Inspirations, or several Degrees of it, I am not able to determine. But this we may certainly affirm, with *Theodoret* (in his Preface to the Book of the Kings) that the Prophets besides the Edition of their Prophecies, published also very frequently the History of their own Times. And *Samuel* began to write the Life of *David*, which *Nathan* and *Gad* finished: Out of which these Things here recorded were extracted.

Ver. 30. *With all his Reign and his Might,*] That is, how he governed his People, and how he warred with their Enemies; and got glorious Victories over them: With all the rest that he did, both as a Prophet, and as a King.

And the Times that went over him, and over Israel,] All the Troubles which he endured, and which befel the People of *Israel* (which are called *Times* in *Psalms xxx. 16.*) or, more simply the meaning may be, all the Revolutions that were in publick Affairs, in his Days.

And over all the Kingdoms of the Countries.] That is, the neighbouring Countries, such as the *Philistines*, *Moab*, *Amalek*, *Syria*, *Damascus*, the *Ammonites*, &c. The Loss of which History is very much bewailed, but God knows better than we, what was fit to be preserved for the Use and Benefit of his Church.





A
COMMENTARY
 UPON THE
SECOND BOOK
 OF THE
CHRONICLES.

AS there are some Things here omitted, which are recorded in the first Book of the *Kings*: So there are several Things contain'd in this Book, of which no mention is made there; particularly in the History of *Jehoshaphat*, and *Hezekiah*. And many other Things there mentioned, are here more fully and clearly explained; as will be observed in the Acts of *Abijah*, *Asa*, *Joash*, and other Kings of *Judah*: Upon which Account *St. Hierom* saith of this Book, it is such, and of so great Use, that he, who without it, will pretend to the Understanding of the Prophets, will expose himself to Scorn.

C H A P. I.

Ver. 1. **A**ND Solomon the Son of David was strengthened in his Kingdom,] After the Death of *Adonijah* and *Joab*, he was confirmed in his Authority and Government.

VOL. II.

And the LORD his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.] In the Targum it is paraphrased, The WORD of the LORD was his Helper, and raised him to a great Height of Glory.

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the Captains of Thousands, and of Hundreds, and to the Judges, and to every Governor in all Israel, the Chief of the Fathers.] Before that great Assembly, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, in the Midst of which he was anointed, went home, Solomon discoursed with them about his Intentions of going to Gibeon to worship God, by offering a great Sacrifice, and desired them to accompany him.*

Ver. 3. *So Solomon and all the Congregation with him, went to the High Place that was at Gibeon,]* This Verse shews, that this was the Thing about which he spake unto them. See 1 Kings iii. 4.

For there was the Tabernacle of the Congregation of God, which Moses the Servant of the LORD

H h h h 2

LORD had made in the Wilderness.] But it was there without the Ark, which was in the City of David, while the Tabernacle was in Gibeon. How these came to be separated, so that the Ark was without the Tabernacle and its Vessels; and the Vessels, and the Altar with the Tabernacle without the Seat of the Glory of God, is not easy to be resolved. *Conradus Pellicanus* supposes, that even then, in those Days, God would have them to know, he did not regard the ceremonious Worship, when the People were under the Government and Instruction of such Men as *Samuel* and *David*: And they were free from Idolatry. Then the LORD did not exact so strictly the legal Services, as he did in Times of Peace and Tranquillity, when they were most necessary for the People; left, after their Custom, when they lived in Ease and Prosperity, they should fall into Superstition, and admire the Rites of the Gentiles. And with such Questions as these he thinks the Jews may be very strongly urged, How came it to pass that in the Days of *Samuel* and *David*, the legal Worship was not observed more precisely? How came the Ark to be separated from the Altars, which were made for the Ark, and not the contrary? Who dispensed with *David* to build another Tabernacle for the Ark, and neglect that built by *Moses*? And how came *Solomon* to sacrifice in another Place, than that which the LORD had chosen?

Ver. 4. *But the Ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim, to the Place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a Tent for it at Jerusalem.*] See 2 Sam. vi. 2, 17.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the brazen Altar that Bezaleel the Son of Uri, the Son of Hur, had made, he put before the Tabernacle of the LORD:*] One would think that this Altar did not stand in its right Place, till *Solomon* set it where it used to stand: But the Words may be translated as in the Margin, *was there before the Tabernacle.*

And Solomon and the Congregation sought unto it.] I think this is better translated by *Victorinus Strigelius*, *Solomon and the Congregation were wont to frequent it; with Sacrifices by which they sought the Favour of God.*

Ver. 6. *And Solomon went up thither to the brazen Altar before the LORD, which was at the Tabernacle of the Congregation,*] This is said to be before the LORD, tho' the Ark was not there, because God was pleased graciously to accept the Sacrifices offered before the Place, where he was wont to dwell, tho' wanting the Token of his glorious Presence.

And offered a thousand Burnt-offerings upon it.] He offered them by the Ministry of the Priests. And Burnt-offerings here signifies (as *Pellicanus* with great Reason thinks) the Sacrifice of Peace-offerings, the general Name being put for the special. For it is not reasonable to think, a thousand Offerings were wholly burnt upon the Altar: But in all Probability he made a Feast for all that were there present, as had been done when this great Assembly offered so freely at his Inauguration, 1 Chron. xxix. 22.

Ver. 7. *In that Night did God appear to Solomon,*] Immediately after the Offering of these Sacrifices.

And said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.] See 1 Kings iii. 5. This was a Declaration that he accepted his Prayers which accompanied those Sacrifices, and would grant whatsoever he desired.

Ver. 8. *And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great Mercy unto David my Father, and hast made me to reign in his Stead.*] An admirable Example unto those who make Petitions unto God, that they should in the first Place thank him for the great Benefits they have received, 1 Kings iii. 6.

Ver. 9. *Now, O LORD God, let thy Promise unto David my Father be established: Viz.] That God would be a Father to him, and make him his Son,* 2 Sam. vii. 14.

For thou hast made me King over a People, like the Dust of the Earth in Multitude.] 1 Kings iii. 8.

Ver. 10. *Give me now Wisdom and Knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this People:*] This is a proverbial Speech, for governing the People, both at Home and Abroad, in Peace and in War. See Num. xxvii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 2.

For who can judge this thy People, that is so great?] Among such a numerous People, he knew there would be so many, and so various and many Times difficult Causes brought before him, that it would be impossible to hear them and judge aright, without a Divine Spirit. See upon 1 Kings iii. 9.

Ver. 11. *And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine Heart, and thou hast not asked Riches, Wealth or Honour, nor the Life of thine Enemies neither yet hast asked long Life, but hast asked Wisdom and Knowledge for thy self, that thou mayest judge my People, over whom I have made thee King:*

Ver. 12. *Wisdom and Knowledge is granted unto thee, and I will give thee Riches, and Wealth, and Honour, such as none of the Kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.*] These two Verses have been sufficiently explained in the same Chapter, 1 Kings iii. 11, 12, 13. only it may be observ'd he doth not say he would give him the Life of his Enemies, because he was to be a peaceable King.

Ver. 13. *Then Solomon came from his Journey to the High Place that was at Gibeon, to Jerusalem, from before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and reigned over Israel.*] We put in these Words, *from his Journey*, which was not needful, for the Words may be translated exactly, *Solomon came from the High Place, &c.* and so it follows, *from before the Tabernacle.* For the Particle *Lamed* signifies not only *to* but *from*. So, *R. Jonas*, whom *Kimchi* calls a famous Grammarian, saith that it is here put for *Mem*, i. e. *from*. But *Kimchi* himself is Author of our Translation, who is followed by *Junius* and *Tremellius*, and others, but comes to the same Purpose.

Ver. 14. *And Solomon gathered Chariots and Horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred Chariots, and twelve thousand Horsemen,*] See upon 1 Kings x. 26.

Which

Which he placed in the Chariot-Cities, and with the King at Jerusalem.] The Chariot-Cities were such wherein there was good Pasturage for the Horses.

Ver. 15. *And the King made Silver and Gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as Stones, and Cedar-trees made he as the Sycomore-trees that are in the Vale for Abundance.] See there, v. 27.*

Ver. 16. *And Solomon had Horses brought out of Egypt, and Linen Yarn: the King's Merchants received the Linen Yarn at a Price.*

Ver. 17. *And they fetcht up, and brought forth out of Egypt a Chariot for six hundred Shekels of Silver, and an Horse for an hundred and fifty: and so brought they out Horses for all the Kings of the Hittites, and for the Kings of Syria, by their Means.] These two Verses are there also explained. See 1 Kings x. 28, 29. From this Place the famous Bochartus gathers, that the Chariots of Egypt in Solomon's Time were drawn by four Horses: For the Tribute which was exacted for a Chariot, was four Times as much as was paid for a single Horse. See his Hierozoicon, P. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 9.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **A**ND Solomon determined to build the House for the Name of the LORD,] Wherein the LORD should be worshipped: As his Father David had designed and directed.

And an House for his Kingdom.] A Royal Palace for himself, and those who should succeed him. But he finished God's House before, he began his own.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told out threescore and ten thousand Men to bear Burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the Mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.] Here are three hundred more than are mentioned in the Book of the Kings: Concerning which Difference, see what I have noted there, (v. 13.) and need not be repeated here.*

Ver. 3. *And Solomon sent to Hiram the King of Tyre, saying, As thou didst deal with David my Father, and didst send him Cedars to build him an House to dwell therein, even so deal with me.] Hiram (as he is called in the Book of the Kings) first sent to him, to congratulate his Succession to the Throne, and then Solomon sent to him: As I have noted there. See 1 Kings v. 1.*

Ver. 4. *Behold, I build an House to the Name of the LORD my God,] That is, he purposed to build, as it is expressed 1 Kings v. 5. and he had also disposed things so, that he was ready to go about it.*

To dedicate it to him,] For his Worship and Service.

And to burn before him sweet Incense, and for the continual Shew-Bread,] So this Bread is called in Numb. iv. 7. because it stood before the LORD continually, being renewed every Week, as we read Exod. xxv. 30. and other Places.

And for the Burnt-offerings Morning and Evening, on the Sabbaths, and on the new Moons, and on the solemn Feasts of the LORD our God:] He reckons up several Parts of the Divine Service, which was there to be performed: Hiram, as I

have elsewhere observed, being no Stranger to the God of Israel.

This is an Ordinance for ever to Israel.] Which God himself had appointed.

Ver. 5. *And the House which I build is great: for great is our God above all Gods.] It was no large Structure which he built, but very magnificent; suitable to the glorious Majesty of him that dwelt therein.*

Ver. 6. *But who is able to build him an House, seeing the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him?] He would not have Hiram imagine, that he had such low Notions of God, as to think he could be confined and comprehended in any House, tho' ever so large, being immense beyond all Conception.*

Who am I then that I should build him an House, save only to burn Sacrifice before him?] It would have been an high Presumption then, for him, or any Man else, to build him an House, for any other End, but only for his Worshippers to assemble there; he being pleased in a special Manner to be present in that Place. The Targum thus paraphrases this, The Heavens are the Throne of his Glory, the Earth is his Footstool, the Abyss, and all People are supported by the Spirit of his WORD. Which carries in it a Notion which the Author had of the ever-blessed Trinity.

Ver. 7. *Send me now, therefore, a Man cunning to work in Gold, and in Silver, and in Brass, and in Iron, and in Purple, and Crimson, and Blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning Men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my Father did provide.] There were admirable Artists in all these Works, at Tyre: Whom he desired to be sent to him; that they might assist those whom David had provided, but were not so skilful as those of Tyre.*

Ver. 8. *Send me also Cedar-trees, Fir-trees, and Algum-trees out of Lebanon:] Or, Almug-trees, concerning which, see what I have noted upon 1 Kings x. 11. To which may be added, that Beckius hath lately conjectur'd, This was a Tree brought originally out of Arabia, as the Prefixal notes. And then it was brought out of that Ophir which was in Arabia, and planted in Lebanon. For there, this Place tells us, these Trees grew, as well as Cedars and Firs.*

(For I know, that thy Servants can skill to cut Timber in Lebanon) and behold my Servants shall be with thy Servants.] The Tyrians were more expert in cutting down and hewing Timber (they dealing much in it) and therefore he desires to entertain them as his principal Workmen, with whom he should join.

Ver. 9. *Even to prepare me Timber in Abundance: for the House which I am about to build, shall be wonderful great.] In the Hebrew, Great and wonderful. This relates not so much to the Bigness of it (tho' taking in all the Courts belonging to it, it was of large extent) but to the admirable Contrivance, and Riches of it.*

Ver. 10. *And behold, I will give to thy Servants the Hewers, that cut Timber, twenty thousand Measures of beaten Wheat,] That is, of Wheat ground, or fine Flour, as R. Jonas, a famous Grammarian, expounds it; whom many Christians follow.*

And twenty thousand Measures of Barley, and twenty thousand Baths of Wine, and twenty thousand

sand Baths of Oil.] All this was Provision for the Workmen; for whose Subsistence Solomon took Care, during their Labour: Besides what he gave to Hiram every Year, for his Household. See upon 1 Kings v. 11. What this Measure, called *Corus*, was, is uncertain: But many learned Men think it the same with an *Omer*; which was the most ancient Word. For, we never find the other used in the Books of Moses, nor in the Prophets; but only in Ezekiel (xlv. 14.) and in the Books of the Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra. But Josephus and the LXX often have the Word *Corus* instead of *Omer*, which was the largest Measure of dry Things, containing, as Epiphanius saith, thirty Bushels.

Ver. 11. *Then Hiram, the King of Tyre, answered in Writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the Lord hath loved his People, he hath made thee King over them.*

Ver. 12. *Hiram said moreover, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, that made Heaven and Earth, who hath given to David the King a wise Son, endued with Prudence, and Understanding, that he might build an House for the LORD, and an House for his Kingdom.*] From these two Verses, Victorinus Strigelius thought it certain, that Hiram was a Profelyte to the true Religion: Because he first of all, owns the God of Israel to be JEHOVAH, the Maker of Heaven and Earth; for none but the Israelites called God by that Name, and when they would distinguish him from Idols and all Creatures, they confess him to be the Creator of the World, as Hiram here doth. And, secondly, he congratulates the Israelites the Happiness they enjoy'd under such a King, which was the Effect of his Love to God and his Church. And, lastly, he declared his Love to the Church, not only in Embassies, and Letters, but in real Acts of Kindness, sending to Solomon Materials to build the House of God, and Artificers the best in the World. But the first of these Reasons is not good; for as my most learned Friend Dr. Alix hath observed to me, the Name of *Jehovah* was known to the Tyrians from the Time of Gideon, as we learn from the Words of Sanchoniathon.

Ver. 13. *And now I have sent a cunning Man (endued with Understanding) of Hiram my Fathers.*] A Man of great Skill and long Experience, being the principal Workman employed by his Father. So the Targum seems to understand the Word *Abi* to signify a Master or chief Workman. But Beckius upon this Place, thinks it most probable, that *Abi* was his Surname, as we call it: And translate this Verse, *He sent him a Man of great Skill, viz. Hiram Abi.* For it was very common among the Eastern People, to call Men by the Name of *Ab*, and *Abi*, or *Aba*, and *Abu*, as he observes. And thus Luther translates these Words, *Hiram Abi*; to whom may be added *Emanuel Sa*, a Person very skilful in this Language.

Ver. 14. *The Son of a Woman of the Daughters of Dan, and his Father was a Man of Tyre,*] The Targum saith, she was a Woman of the Tribe of Naphtali; because 'tis said so in 1 Kings vii. 14. and therefore he reconciles these two Places; by a Daughter of Dan, he means of a Man called Dan, who was of the Tribe of Naphtali: Which being near to Tyre, she mar-

ried one of that Nation. Or, as Jarchi and Kimchi will have it, he was a Jew; but dwelt at Tyre: As Obed-edom was called a Gittite; because he dwelt in Gath, but was a Levite. See my Notes upon 1 Kings vii. 14.

Skilful to work in Gold, and in Silver, in Brass, in Iron, in Stone, and in Timber, in Purple, in Blue, and in fine Linen, and in Crimson: also to grave any Manner of Graving, and to find out every Device which shall be put to him,] These last Words argue this Man to have been a great Artist, who could contrive any Thing that was propounded to him, though never wrought before.

With thy cunning Men, and with the cunning Men of my Lord David thy Father.] This seems another Argument, that Hiram was of the true Religion, because he honoured David with the Name of his Lord; as he doth Solomon in the next Verse. Or, as others think, he was become tributary to them; his Country very much depending upon them for Corn.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore; the Wheat and the Barley, and the Oyl, and the Wine which my Lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his Servants:*] For their Support in their Labour.

Ver. 16. *And we will cut Wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need, and we will bring it to thee in Flotes by Sea to Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.*] The Hebrew Word *Rapsodoth* (which we translate *Flotes*) is of the same Signification with *Daberoth*, 1 Kings v. 9. as a learned Jew notes. By which are meant, Timber bound together, which was drawn thro' the Sea and thro' Rivers. Such Flotes were used, especially in the River Tygris (as Beckius here notes out of an Hebrew Author) which was so swift, that Vessels were wont to be overturned by the Stream: And therefore they employed these Flotes alone, made of Reeds tied close together; upon which both Men and Burdens went down the River. See my Notes upon 1 Kings v. 9.

Ver. 17. *And Solomon numbred all the Strangers that were in the Land of Israel, after the numbring wherewith David his Father had numbred them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand, and three thousand and six hundred.*] These were the Reliques (as Kimchi thinks) of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, mentioned afterwards c. viii. 7. But they were not Idolaters; for then David would not have suffered them to dwell in the Land: But they worshipped God alone, tho' they did not embrace the Jewish Religion wholly, by being circumcised. Those David had numbred, that he might know their Strength and their Condition. Which did not proceed from such Vanity, as moved him to number his own People, but out of a prudent Care, that they might be distinguished from Jews, and be employed in such Work, as he did not think fit to put upon the Israelites. See 1 Chron. xxii. 2.

Ver. 18. *And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be Bearers of Burdens, and fourscore thousand to be Hewers in the Mountain, and three thousand and six hundred Overseers to set the People a-work.*] This he had said before, v. 2. but now relates of what Condition they were, who were put to these servile Employments. They that

that were the Overseers (whom the LXX call ἐργασίωται) were, I suppose, of the Children of Israel.

C H A P. III.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN Solomon began to build the House of the LORD at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah,] See what I have noted concerning Moriah, upon Gen. xxii. 2. To which may be here added, That Part of this Mountain was in the Tribe of Judah, and Part of it in the Tribe of Benjamin: So that the Temple is ascribed to them both. To Judah, in Psalm lxxviii. 68, 69. to Benjamin, Deut. xxxiii. 12. For the greatest Part of the Courts were in the Tribe of Judah: But the Altar, the Porch, the most holy Part of the Temple, where the Ark and the Cherubims were, in the Tribe of Benjamin.

Where the LORD appeared unto David his Father, in the Place that David had prepared in the Threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.] The Targum here derives the Sanctity of this Place from many noble Things that were done there in ancient Times. For in this Place, saith he, Abraham worshipped the Name of the LORD, and here he offered up his Son Isaac, but he was delivered by the MEMRA (the WORD) of the LORD, and a Ram substituted in his Place. Here Jacob prayed when he fled from his Brother Esau; and here the Angel appeared to David, and ordered him to offer Sacrifice in the Threshing-floor of Ornan. By which Appearance and Sacrifice this Mountain was consecrated to be a Place where the Temple should be built. See 1 Chron. xxi. 26. But Maimonides (in his Treatise of the Building of the Temple) carries this a great deal higher. For here, saith he, Noah built an Altar when he came out of the Ark, (as Abraham did when he offered his Son) yea, here Cain and Abel offered their Sacrifices, as Adam the first Man had done before them. And more than that, he will have it, that he was created in this Place; whence the Saying of their wise Men, Man was made in the very Place of his Expiation. But this is unworthy of Maimonides, who is not wont to follow such Conceits as this, which is borrowed from a foolish Book called Pirke Eliezer.

Ver. 2. And he began to build in the second Day of the second Month, in the fourth Year of his Reign.] See 1 Kings vi. 1. In the preceding Winter it was not fit to build, and in the first Month the Paschal Feast hindred, as Jarchi here observes. And Dr. Alix takes this to have been a Sabbatick Year, in which the People were free from the Tillage of their Ground.

Ver. 3. Now these are the Things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the House of God.] He had been instructed by David his Father, who gave him a Model, according to which he built it. See 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, &c. The Targum translates these Words very clearly, which in the Hebrew are a little obscure, These are the Dimensions of the Foundation of the Temple, which Solomon began to build. So in our Margin we translate the Word, not instructed, but founded. And thus, Beckius thinks, it is most properly to be understood, because Solo-

mon did not receive from his Father a Delineation of the whole Fabrick of the Temple, but only of the Porch, and of the Courts, and some other Things: As the forenamed Place tells us.

The Length by Cubits after the first Measure, was threescore Cubits, and the Breadth twenty Cubits.] He projected the Sanctuary, and the Oracle, both together; and in their first Description they were to be in Length sixty Cubits: That is, forty for the Sanctuary, and twenty for the most holy Place. Or, as some think, by the first Measure, is here meant that Measure which Moses followed in building of the Tabernacle: For in process of Time, the Cubits altered, and were larger. See 1 Kings vi. 2. But this is doubtful.

Ver. 4. And the Porch that was in the Front of the House, the Length of it was according to the Breadth of the House, twenty Cubits,] So we read expressly, 1 Kings vi. 2. that the Breadth was twenty Cubits.

And the Height was an hundred and twenty:] This is a very different Account from that in the Book of the Kings, where it is said to be thirty Cubits. But Abendana hath briefly summed up what their Authors say to reconcile these two Places. Some think it probable, that the Porch was but thirty Cubits high, but the whole Temple higher. Thus Kimchi. Others, that the Porch and all were of the same Height: But from the Foundation to the Roof was but thirty Cubits: Tho' above the Roof there were ὑπερῆα, Upper-rooms, which were ninety Cubits high. See upon 1 Kings vi. 3. And indeed it is not likely, that this House is lower than the second Temple, which by the Command of Cyrus was to be threescore Cubits. Ezra vi. 3. And see Josephus Lib. vii. Cap. 8.

And he overlaid it within with pure Gold.] As he did the rest of the House.

Ver. 5. And the greater House he cieled with Fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine Gold, and set thereon Palm-trees and Chains.] By the greater House he means the Sanctuary, or holy Place: Which was larger than the most Holy, as was before noted.

Ver. 6. And he garnished the House with precious Stones for Beauty:] This shews the Use to which the precious Stones, that were dedicated by David, and by his Princes, were employed, 1 Chron. xxix. 2, 8. which served not merely for the Garments of the High-Priest, but for the House itself, which was garnished with them. Tho' I do not know, but the Observation of Bochartus may be true, that these Stones are called precious Stones, tho' they were common, because they excelled the rest in Greatness, Fineness, and in their polishing, Hierozoicon, P. ii. Lib. v. Cap. 7.

And the Gold was Gold of Parvaim.] It is a great Mistake of Abraham Mylius, and others, who take this Place to have been Peru: Which the great Man now mentioned hath proved to be Taprobana, (see upon 1 Kings ix. 26.) which was called Parvaim, and with a small Change, Parvan, and Provan: From whence he conjectures came the Name of Taprobana, which is compounded of Taph (which in Arabick signifies a Shore or Coast) and Parvan, Lib. ii. Phaleg.

leg. Cap. 28. The *Jews*, after their Manner, say the Gold was called the Gold of *Parvaim*, because it was of a deep red Colour, like the Blood of *Parim*, that is, *Bullocks*, and signifies the most excellent Gold; as *L'Empereur* notes upon *Middoth*: Though others of them say it was a Place.

Ver. 7. He overlaid also the House, the Beams, the Posts, and the Walls thereof, and the Doors thereof with Gold, and graven Cherubims on the Walls.] See 1 Kings vi. 21, 22, 29.

Ver. 8. And he made the most holy House, the Length whereof was according to the breadth of the House, twenty Cubits, and the Breadth thereof twenty Cubits: and he overlaid with Gold amounting to six hundred Talents.] The very same is said, 1 Kings vi. 20. only here is added the Quantity of Gold, which he expended upon this Place, which was very great.

Ver. 9. And the Weight of the Nails was fifty Shekels of Gold:] Each Nail, I suppose, whereby the Plates of Gold were fastened to the Boards, cost fifty Shekels.

And he overlaid the upper Chambers with Gold.] These seem to be the Chambers mentioned 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. of which *David* gave him a Model. But *Dr. Lightfoot* thinks, that over the holy Place there were no Chambers at all, in the Temple of *Solomon*, but it was all open to the Roof. Over the most holy Place, indeed there was an upper Room of ten Cubits high; but why that should be called *Chambers* in the plural Number, and why it should be overlaid with Gold, since there was none came into it, nor any way to come there, is not easy to apprehend. And as for the side Chambers that were on the Outside of the House, there was no Reason they should be overlaid with Gold, since they were Places, wherein their Corn, and Wine, and Tythes, and First-Fruits, and such like Things were laid up. Therefore by the *Hebrew* Word *Eljoth* we are not to understand *upper Chambers*, but the upper Floor, or the Roof of the Holy and most holy Place; which were overlaid with Gold every where; both the Floor on which they trod, and the Walls round about, and the Roof over-head. See his *Temple-Service*. Chap. xv. Sect. 3.

Ver. 10. And in the most holy House he made two Cherubims of Image Work,] I do not know why we thus translate the last Words, for the *Hebrew* which we translate *Image*, hath nothing of that Signification in it: Unless we take the Word *Zaazum* to be the same with *Zeeazim*, which some of the *Jews* say, signifies their Faces were like to Boys. And accordingly many understand these Words, they had the Figure of Youths, or Boys. But *Beckius*, upon the *Targum*, in this Place seems to me to have given a more rational Account of the Word, which he derives from the Root *Zaa*, and translates it the *Work of Motions*, or moveable Work, for they stood upon their Feet, ver. 13. as ready to move. In which he follows *Porsterrus* and *Buxtorfius*.

And overlaid them with Gold.] For they were made of Olive Wood, and were not like those of *Moses*, of beaten Gold. See upon 1 Kings vi. 23, 28.

Ver. 11. And the Wings of the Cherubims were twenty Cubits long: one Wing of the one Cherub was five Cubits, reaching to the Wall of the House: and the other Wing was likewise five Cubits, reaching to the Wing of the other Cherub.

Ver. 12. And one Wing of the other Cherub was five Cubits, reaching to the Wall of the House: and the other Wing was five Cubits, also joining to the Wing of the other Cherub.

Ver. 13. And the Wings of these Cherubims spread forth themselves twenty Cubits:] See these three Verses explained, 1 Kings vi. 24, 25, 26. where the Height of these Cherubims is also set down.

And they stood on their Feet,] See 1 Kings vi. 26.

And their Faces were inward.] In the *Hebrew*, towards the House: That is, toward the inner House, or holy Place, as *Jarchi* expounds it: Whose Words are, Their Heads were not erect, that they should look outwards; but they bended down, that they might look one upon another.

Ver. 14. And he made a Vail of Blue, and Purple, and Crimson, and fine Linen, and wrought Cherubims thereon. That is, the Vail before the most holy Place; which is the Partition mentioned in 1 Kings vii. 21.

Ver. 15. Also he made before the House,] Before the Entrance into the Sanctuary.

Two Pillars of thirty and five Cubits high,] They were not each of them thus high, but both of them together, as it is explained 1 Kings vii. 15.

And the Chapter that was on the Top of each of them, was five Cubits.] In the Form of a Crown, as the *Targum* expresses it. See 1 Kings vii. 16.

Ver. 16. And he made Chains, as in the Oracle,] See 1 Kings vi. 21.

And put them on the Heads of the Pillars, and made an hundred Pomegranates, and put them on the Chains.] There were an hundred in two Rows, two hundred in all. See 1 Kings vii. 20.

Ver. 17. And he reared up the Pillars before the Temple, one on the right Hand, and the other on the left; and called the Name of that on the right Hand, *Jachin*, and the Name of that on the left, *Boaz*.] See 1 Kings vii. 21. The *Targum* on these Words make this Commentary; he called the one *Jachin*, because *Nachon*, the Kingdom of the House of *David* was established; and the other *Boaz*, from the Name of the Patriarch of that Royal House of *Judah*, from whom all their Kings were derived.

C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. **M**oreover, he made an Altar of Brass, twenty Cubits the length thereof, and twenty Cubits the breadth thereof, and ten Cubits the height thereof.] The making this Altar so many Cubits high, may seem to contradict God's Command, *Exod.* xx. 26. But see what I have noted there, to shew how the Ascent might be so contrived, that the Priest's Nakedness should not be discovered. The making it of Brass also, was, no doubt, by the Direction of God, who told *David* how such Things should be made, 1 Chron. xxviii. as *L'Empereur* very well observes.

Ver. 2. *Also he made a molten Sea of ten Cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five Cubits the height thereof, and a Line of thirty Cubits did compass it round about.*] This, and the following Verses are explained 1 Kings vii. 23.

Ver. 3. *And under it was the Similitude of Oxen, which did compass it round about, ten in a Cubit compassing the Sea round about,*] These Oxen are called Knops in 1 Kings vii. 24. which were little Protuberances, or Bunches round about the Lips of the Laver, in the Figure of Oxen. There were ten of them in every Cubit, and the Circumference being thirty Cubits, there were three hundred of them in one Row: And they being cast in two Rows one under another, were six hundred in all.

Two Rows of Oxen, were cast, when it was cast.] They were not fastened on afterward, but cast together with the Vessel itself. So Kimchi, and Jarchi. The latter of which thus explains it: They were not joined to it by Nails or Soder, but all cast together with the Sea.

Ver. 4. *It stood upon twelve Oxen, three looking toward the North, and three looking toward the West, and three looking toward the South, and three looking toward the East: and the Sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder Parts were inward.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 25.

Ver. 5. *And the Thickness of it was an Hand breadth, and the Brim of it like the Work of the Brim of a Cup, with Flowers of Lilies, and it received and held three thousand Baths.*] See this Account reconciled with that in 1 Kings vii. 26. The Targum here thus paraphrases, Three thousand Baths of Things dry, and two thousand of Things liquid. But others better explain it, that the Quantity of Water which was commonly in it, was two thousand Baths; but if it were filled up to the Top, it would hold three thousand.

Ver. 6. *He made also ten Lavens, and put five on the right Hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the Burnt-offering, they washed in them; but the Sea was for the Priests to wash in.*] See there, 1 Kings vii. 38, 39.

Ver. 7. *And he made ten Candlesticks of Gold,*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 49.

According to their Form, and set them in the Temple, five on the right Hand, and five on the left.] Those Words according to their Form, are thus translated by the Targum, As was convenient or agreeable to them. Or the meaning may be, According to the Pattern which David gave him.

Ver. 8. *He made also ten Tables, and placed them in the Temple, five on the right Side, and five on the left: and he made an hundred Basons of Gold.*] See upon 1 Kings vii. 48. Some have observed, that there was the very same Furniture made by Solomon for the most holy Place, that was made by Moses; but in the holy Place there was an Augmentation made of ten Candlesticks, and ten Tables. But they should have remembered, that Solomon also added two Cherubims, and of a larger Size, to the most holy Place, which were not there before.

Ver. 9. *Furthermore, he made the Court of the Priests, and the great Court, and Doors for the Court, and overlaid the Doors of them with*

Brass:] See 1 Kings vi. 36. where the Court of the Priests is called *the inner Court*, it being next the Sanctuary: And by the *great Court* here is meant the Court of the People, to which he made Doors.

Ver. 10. *And he set the Sea on the right Side of the East End, over against the South;*] See my Notes upon 1 Kings vii. 39.

Ver. 11. *And Hiram made the Pots, and the Shovels, and the Basons, and Hiram finished the Work that he was to make for King Solomon for the House of God:*] See there, 1 Kings vii. 40. He did not stir from the Work, but finished it all before he left Solomon's Service.

Ver. 12. *To wit, the two Pillars, and the Pommels,*] Or, *the Globes*, as we now speak, and as the Targum translates it.

And the Chapters which were on the Top of the two Pillars, and the two Wreaths to cover the two Pommels of the Chapters which were on the Top of the Pillars,] This is there explained, 1 Kings vii. 41.

Ver. 13. *And four hundred Pomegranates on the two Wreaths, &c.*] See ver. 42.

Ver. 14. *And he made Bases, &c.*] See ver. 43.

Ver. 15. *One Sea, and twelve Oxen under it,*] See ver. 44.

Ver. 16. *The Pots also, and the Shovels, and the Flesh-hooks, and all their Instruments, did Hiram his Father make to King Solomon for the House of the LORD, of bright Brass.*] In the 1 Kings vii. 45. it is said, *which Hiram made*: And that's the meaning here; for the Words are best translated *Hiram Abi*, or *Abif* did make. See upon c. ii. 13. which seems more easy than other Expositions which may be given of the Words. For some think Solomon calls him *his Father*, out of great Respect to him; or, because he was the Inventor of all this excellent Work, (as in Gen. iv. 20, 21.) or it is a short Speech, for Hiram and his Father.

Ver. 17. *In the Plain of Jordan did the King cast them, in the Clay Ground between Succoth and Zaredathab.*] See 1 Kings vii. 46.

Ver. 18. *Thus Solomon made all these Vessels in great Abundance,*] More for Ornament and Grandeur than for necessary Use.

For the Weight of the Brass could not be found out.] See 1 Kings vii. 47.

Ver. 19. *And Solomon made all the Vessels that were for the House of God.*] That is, for the Sanctuary.

The golden Altar also, and the Tables whereon the Shew-bread was set.] One Table only was made by Moses, but Solomon made ten (ver. 8.) for the greater Convenience of the Priests in their Ministration: That they might have a Table at Hand, whereon to set the Bread which they took off, when they set on new upon the Table of Shew-bread. But it is not improbable, that Tables in the Plural are put for Table in the Singular, and that he speaks of that on which the Bread stood before the LORD. Which, I suppose, was of Gold, as the other were of Silver.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the Candlesticks with their Lamps, that they should burn after the Manner,*] Which God had appointed in the Law of Moses.

Before the Oracle, of pure Gold;] Here the Targum calls the Oracle, *the House of Expiations*:

Because into this most holy Place the High-Priest went with the Blood, to make Atonement on the great Day of Expiation.

Ver. 21. *And the Flowers, and the Lamps, and the Tongs made be of Gold, and that perfect Gold.]* The Hebrew Word *Miklot*, which signifies *Perfection*, denotes Gold most purified, as *Kimchi* saith their Doctors expound it. But he thinks it signifies simply, all these Vessels were of Gold.

Ver. 22. *And the Snuffers, and the Basons, and the Spoons, and the Censers of pure Gold:]* See upon 1 Kings vii. 50.

And the Entry of the House, the inner Doors thereof for the most holy Place, and the Doors of the House of the Temple were of Gold.] They were not intirely of massy Gold, but of Wood (as we read 1 Kings vi. 31, &c.) covered with Plates of Gold, ver. 35. and see 1 Kings xviii. 16.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. **T**HUS all the Work that Solomon made for the House of the LORD, was finished: and Solomon brought in all the Things that David his Father had dedicated; and the Silver, and the Gold, and all the Instruments, put he among the Treasures of the House of God.] See 1 Kings vii. 51. David, we read, 1 Chron. xxii. 14. made such vast Preparations for building of this House, that there was more than could be spent in the Work. What remained therefore, Solomon would not employ to his own Use, but laid it up in the Treasures of God's House.

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon assembled the Elders of Israel, and all the Heads of the Tribes, the Chief of the Fathers of the Children of Israel unto Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, out of the City of David which is in Zion.]* See 1 Kings viii. 1.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore all the Men of Israel assembled themselves unto the King]* That is, all the Persons fore-mentioned.

In the Feast, which was in the seventh Month.] 1 Kings viii. 2. The Feast of Tabernacles, which they kept seven Days; and the Feast of Dedication, which lasted as many, c. vii. 9.

Ver. 4. *And all the Elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the Ark.]* That is, they whose Office it was to carry it.

Ver. 5. *And they brought up the Ark, and the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and all the holy Vessels that were in the Tabernacle, these did the Priests and the Levites bring up.]* See 1 Kings viii. 3.

Ver. 6. *Also King Solomon and all the Congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the Ark, sacrificed Sheep and Oxen, which could not be told nor numbred for Multitude.]* See 1 Kings viii. 5. The Observation of *Victorinus Strigelius* upon this History is very pious: That nothing is more lovely in human Things, than such Concord as here appeared among all Orders of Men; both of Teachers and Learners, Magistrates, Soldiers, and People, who were all combined to promote the Service and Honour of God. Such Unity ought to be studied by Christian People, that we may be all one, as our Saviour prayed.

Ver. 7. *And the Priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD unto his Place, to the Oracle of the House in the most holy Place, even under the Wings of the Cherubims.]* The very same Words are in 1 Kings viii. 6. See there.

Ver. 8. *For the Cherubims spread forth their Wings over the Place of the Ark, and the Cherubims covered the Ark and the Staves thereof above.]* And this Verse also is the same with 1 Kings viii. 7.

Ver. 9. *And they drew out the Staves of the Ark, that the Ends of the Staves were seen from the Ark before the Oracle, but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this Day.]* Or, they are there, as the Margin hath it out of 1 Kings viii. 8. where there are the same Words. And when that Book was written, they were exactly true; but when this Author transcribed them into this Book, after the Captivity, there was then neither Staves, nor Ark remaining. Therefore he only relates how Solomon settled Things. See my Notes there.

Ver. 10. *There was nothing in the Ark save the two Tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a Covenant with the Children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.]* These Words also are there explained. See 1 Kings viii. 10.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass when the Priests were come out of the holy Place,]* Whither they carried the Ark, and set it in its Place.

For all the Priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by Course.] As David had appointed in the ordinary Service at the Temple. But upon this extraordinary Occasion they all attended (tho' it was not their Course) at least as many as could, and were sanctified to do all the Duties of this great Day. For, as *Kimchi* observes, there were such a Multitude of Sacrifices offered, that the Service of them all was necessary.

Ver. 12. *Also the Levites which were the Singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their Sons and their Brethren; being arrayed in white Linen, having Cymbals, and Psalteries, and Harps,]* According to their several Families, as the *Targum* well explains it, viz. those of the Family of *Asaph*, &c.

Stood at the East End of the Altar,] Where the *Talmudists* say there were two Desks for them to stand in and sing. One of which had fifteen Steps, on which they sung those Songs, called the Songs of Degrees or Steps. For there is no better Account, L' *Empereur* thinks, can be given of that Name.

And with them an hundred and twenty Priests sounding with Trumpets.] Who joined with the Levites it appears by the next Verse in praising God.

Ver. 13. *It came even to pass as the Trumpeters and Singers were as one, to make one Sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD,]* When they were all ready, as one Man, to make with one Voice a loud Sound.

And when they lift up their Voice with the Trumpets and Cymbals, and Instruments of Musick, and praised the LORD, saying,] As soon as they began to sound, and play on the Instruments, and sing the following Words.

For

For he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever:] Many think they sung the whole Psalm, which thus begins, *O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good, &c.* And so the LXX in this Place, ἐξομολογείδε τῷ Κυρίῳ, &c. And the Vulgar in like Manner.

That then the House was filled with a Cloud, even the House of the LORD:] In the Hebrew there is nothing answering to the Word *even*: But the whole may be thus plainly rendred, *The House was filled, with the Cloud of the House of the LORD.* That is, with the Cloud that was wont to be in the most holy Place, and was the Token of the gracious Presence and Favour of the Divine Majesty among them.

Ver. 14. *So that the Priests could not stand to minister by reason of the Cloud: for the Glory of the LORD had filled the House of God.]* See 1 Kings viii. 19. It is a pious Reflection, which *Victorinus Strigelius* makes upon this Place: Which admonisheth us, saith he, *First*, of the Presence of God in his Church; and, *Secondly*, of the Abrogation of the Levitical Worship. It is a most sweet Promise of our Saviour, *Where two or three are gathered in my Name, I will be there present in the midst of them.* Thus when the Levites here sung his Praises, the House of God was filled with a Cloud, which was the Token of his Presence: And when the Auditors of the Apostles prayed, (*Acts* iv. 31.) the whole House where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost: But the Levitical Priests being unable to discharge their Office, after the Majesty of the LORD filled the House; it was a plain Signification that their Ministry and Way of Worship should cease, when the Messiah came, in whom the Fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily.

C H A P. VI.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN said Solomon, the LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick Darkness.] When Solomon saw that Token of the Divine Presence, he made this Speech to the Priests. See 1 Kings viii. 12. and the following Verses. For there is little in this Chapter, but what is there explained: The Sense, and commonly the very Words being the same. The Paraphrase of the Targum upon these Words is very remarkable, which is this, *The LORD would have his SHECHINAH, or glorious Presence, to reside in his City Jerusalem, in his Sanctuary, which I have built to the Name of his WORD; and behold a thick Cloud covereth it.* This Notion of God's dwelling in Darkness was among the Heathen (who hence learn'd it) for *Justin Martyr* observes, that *Orpheus* and another ancient Writer, call God Πάγνηστος, altogether hidden. And the Lacedæmonians, who pretend to be of Kin to the Jews, had a Temple dedicated to Ζῆς Σκόλιος, Jupiter the Dark, as *Strabo* relates out of *Pausanias*. See *Meursi. Miscell. Lacon.* L. i. C. 1.

Ver. 2. *But I have built an House of Habitation for thee, and a Place for thy dwelling for ever.]* See there, 1 Kings viii. 13.

Ver. 3. *And the King turned his Face, and blessed the whole Congregation of Israel, (and all the Congregation of Israel stood)]* Who were in

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the great Court before the House. See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 4. *And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his Hands fulfilled that which he spake with his Mouth to my Father David, saying,]* The same with what is there said, ver. 15.

Ver. 5. *Since the Day that I brought forth my People out of the Land of Egypt, I chose no City among all the Tribes of Israel to build an House in; that my Name might be there, neither chose I any Man to be a Ruler over my People Israel.]* The last Words of this Verse, are very different from those 1 Kings viii. 16. where it is said, *but I chose David to be over my People Israel.* Till whose Time there was no settled Succession of a Ruler, that he, and his Posterity should reign over them; but God raised up Judges out of what Tribe and Family he pleased: And when he made Saul King, did not continue that Dignity in his Family, as he did to David.

Ver. 6. *But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my Name might be there, and have chosen David to be over my People Israel.]* But now he declared both the City wherein he would dwell, and also the Person and Family, whom he would have to govern Israel.

Ver. 7. *Now it was in the Heart of David my Father to build an House for the Name of the LORD God of Israel.*

Ver. 8. *But the LORD said to David my Father, Forasmuch as it was in thine Heart to build an House for my Name, thou didst well in that it was in thine Heart.*

Ver. 9. *Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the House, but thy Son which shall come forth out of thy Loins, he shall build the House for my Name.*

Ver. 10. *The LORD therefore hath performed his Word that he hath spoken: for I am risen up in the room of David my Father, and am set on the Throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and have built the House for the Name of the LORD God of Israel.]* All these four Verses are in the same Words, 1 Kings viii. 17, 18, 19, 20. See there. I shall only therefore observe here, how the Targum translates the last Words of this Verse; *built an House to the Name of the WORD of the LORD God of Israel.* In which he makes the WORD a distinct Person from the LORD God of Israel, but LORD God also; else he would not have built an House for his Name, that he might be there worshipped and served.

Ver. 11. *And in it have I put the Ark, wherein is the Covenant of the LORD, that he made with the Children of Israel.]* There is no Difference between these Words, and those 1 Kings viii. 21. but that there he saith, *I have set there the Place of the Ark; which is the same in Effect with these Words; which signify he had put the Ark in the most holy Place.*

Ver. 12. *And he stood before the Altar of the LORD, in the Presence of all the Congregation of Israel, and spread forth his Hands,]* See upon 1 Kings viii. 22.

Ver. 13. *For Solomon had made a brazen Scaffold, of five Cubits long, and five Cubits broad, and three Cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the Court, and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his Knees before all the Congregation of Israel, and spread forth his Hands towards Hea-*

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ven.] This Verse is added to what we read in the Book of the Kings: And, as Solomon *Jarchi* observes, hath relation to what goes before: in the Presence of all Israel. For he was advanced higher than they, that he might be seen and heard of all.

Ver. 14. And said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the Heaven, nor in the Earth; which keepest Covenant, and shewest Mercy unto thy Servants, that walk before thee with all their Hearts.] See 1 Kings viii. 23. where there are the same Words.

Ver. 15. Thou which hast kept with thy Servant David my Father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy Mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine Hand, as it is this Day.

Ver. 16. Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, keep with thy Servant David my Father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a Man in my Sight to sit upon the Throne of Israel; yet so, that thy Children take heed to their way to walk in my Law, as thou hast walked before me.] These two Verses, with very little Difference, are in 1 Kings viii. 24, 25.

Ver. 17. Now then, O LORD God of Israel, let thy Word be verified, which thou hast spoke unto thy Servant David.

Ver. 18. (But will God in very Deed dwell with Men on the Earth? behold, Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this House which I have built!) See there, ver. 26, 27. I shall only add the Gloss of *Kimchi* upon the last Words, Thou art rather the Place of this World, and comprehendest all Things, than the World the Place of thee, which cannot comprehend thee. Wherefore then have I built this Temple? It was only that thy gracious Presence might dwell there, hearing the Prayers, which shall be made in this Place. So the next Words import.

Ver. 19. Have Respect therefore to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to his Supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the Cry, and the Prayer, which thy Servant prayeth before thee:] See there, ver. 28.

Ver. 20. That thine Eye may be open upon this House Day and Night, upon the Place whereof thou hast said, that thou wouldst put thy Name there, to hearken unto the Prayer which thy Servant prayeth towards this Place.] Those Words, that thine Eyes may be open, the *Targum* expounds, by his Divine Providence and Protection, in this Place of the Residence of his gracious Presence, as the Words there are.

Ver. 21. Harken therefore unto the Supplications of thy Servant, and of thy People Israel, which they shall make towards this Place: hear thou from thy Dwelling-place even from Heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.] See 1 Kings viii. 30.

Ver. 22. If a Man sin against his Neighbour, and an Oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the Oath come before thine Altar in this House.] See there ver. 31. Whereby it appears, that a Man who was to purge himself of any Trespas, whereof he was accused against his Neighbour, by an Oath, was to do it at the Temple, before the Altar of God, from whom he expected Remission of Sin.

Ver. 23. Then hear thou from Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants, by requiting the Wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own Head, and

by justifying the Righteous, by giving him according to his Righteousness.] See there, 1 Kings viii. 32.

Ver. 24. And if thy People Israel be put to the worse before the Enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy Name, and pray, and make Supplication before thee in this House,

Ver. 25. Then hear thou from the Heavens, and forgive the Sin of thy People Israel, and bring them again unto the Land which thou gavest to them and to their Fathers.] These two Verses are, in a manner, the very same with those 1 Kings viii. 33, 34.

Ver. 26. When the Heaven is shut up, and there is no Rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray towards this Place, and confess thy Name, and turn from their Sin, when thou dost afflict them:] This and all the rest, to v. 32. are the same, in a manner, with 1 Kings viii. 35, 36, &c. And therefore see the Explanation of them there: And in v. 29. he desires, that all Prayers, whether for private or publick Concerns that were made here, might be heard.

Ver. 27. Then hear thou from Heaven, and forgive the Sin of thy Servants, and of thy People Israel, when thou hast taught them the good Way wherein they should walk; and send Rain upon thy Land which thou hast given unto thy People for an Inheritance.

Ver. 28. If there be Dearth in the Land, if there be Pestilence, if there be Blasting, or Mildew, Locusts or Caterpillars; if their Enemies besiege them in the Cities of their Land; whatsoever Sore, or whatsoever Sicknefs there be:

Ver. 29. Then what Prayer, or what Supplication soever shall be made of any Man, or of all thy People Israel, when every one shall know his own Sore, and his own Grief, and shall spread forth his Hands in this House:

Ver. 30. Then hear thou from Heaven thy Dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every Man according unto all his Ways, whose Heart thou knowest: (for thou only knowest the Hearts of the Children of Men)

Ver. 31. That they may fear thee, to walk in thy Ways so long as they live in the Land which thou gavest unto our Fathers.

Ver. 32. Moreover, concerning the Stranger, which is not of thy People Israel, but is come from a far Country for thy great Name's sake, and thy mighty Hand, and thy stretched out Arm; if they come and pray in this House:

Ver. 33. Then hear thou from the Heavens, even from thy Dwelling-place, and do according to all that the Stranger calleth to thee for; that all People of the Earth may know thy Name, and fear thee, as doth thy People Israel, and may know that this House which I have built, is called by thy Name.] These two Verses are there also explained in v. 41, 42, 43. Unto which I shall here add this pious Reflection which Dr. *Jackson* makes upon them.

“Solomon knew the
“Goodness of God to be so great, that it
“could not be a whit lessened towards Israel,
“how far soever it was extended towards other
“People. Happy had it been for that Nation,
“if their Charity had been like this of their
“heavenly Father. But it was their seeking
“to ingross God's promised Blessings to Man-
“kind,

“ kind, which brought that grievous Curse
“ upon them, under which they groan at this
“ Day.”

Ver. 34. *If thy People go out to War against their Enemies, by the Way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee toward this City which thou hast chosen, and the House which I have built for thy Name:*

Ver. 35. *Then hear thou from the Heavens their Prayer, and their Supplication, and maintain their Cause.*

Ver. 36. *If they sin against thee, (for there is no Man that sinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their Enemies, and they carry them away Captives unto a Land far off or near;*

Ver. 37. *Yet if they bethink themselves in the Land whither they are carried Captives, and turn, and pray unto thee in the Land of their Captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly.*

Ver. 38. *If they return to thee with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, in the Land of their Captivity, whither they have carried them Captives, and pray toward their Land which thou gavest unto their Fathers, and toward the City which thou hast chosen, and toward the House which I have built for thy Name:*

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou from the Heavens, even from thy Dwelling-place, their Prayer, and their Supplications, and maintain their Cause, and forgive thy People which have sinned against thee.]* All these Verses are, with some small Variation in a few Words, and a large Addition to the last Verse in 1 Kings viii. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50.

Ver. 40. *Now, my God, let (I beseech thee) thine Eyes be open, and let thine Ears be attent unto the Prayer that is made in this Place.]* He sums up all these Words, beseeching him, that the Prayer which was presented to him here, for any Blessing, of what Sort soever it was, might be graciously accepted by him.

Ver. 41. *Now therefore, arise, O LORD God, into thy Resting-Place, thou, and the Ark of thy Strength: let thy Priests, O LORD God, be clothed with Salvation, and let thy Saints rejoice in Goodness.]* These Words are Part of Psalm cxxxii. 8, 9. with a little Alteration. Wherein he beseeches God to take up his Habitation here, together with his Ark (whereby such Wonders and Miracles had been wrought) and stir from hence no more. And then, that he would defend his Priests, who ministered to him here; that they might obtain his Blessings for others: So that all the People might rejoice in his great Bounty to them. The Targum here translates the first Words after a remarkable Manner, *Now therefore, before the LORD God, rest in thy Glory, thou, and the Ark of thy Strength.* Upon which Words an unanswerable Question is made by Beckius to the Jews, Who is this, thou, who, according to their Paraphrase, rests before Jehovah? Their Mouths are stopped, unless they acknowledge another Jehovah, that is, the WORD of God, (as he is commonly called in the Targum) the second Person in the ever blessed Trinity.

Ver. 42. *O LORD God, turn not away the Face of thine Anointed,]* Since he had appointed

Solomon to be the King of his People, he hoped God would have a Regard to his humble Petition. For as to *look upon* one, or *lift up the Countenance* upon him, is to have a kind Respect to him: So to *turn away the Face*, is to reject and refuse him.

Remember the Mercies of David thy Servant.] This is another Argument for Hope, that his Prayer would be granted: Because God had such a great Kindness for David, that he had made very large and most gracious Promises unto him, and his Seed after him.

C H A P. VII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when Solomon had made an End of praying, the Fire came down from Heaven, and consumed the Burnt-offering, and the Sacrifices; and the Glory of the Lord filled the House.] See 1 Kings viii. 11. This is added to what is recorded in that Book, to shew God's gracious Acceptance of Solomon's Prayer and Sacrifices; to give him Assurance he would be present in this Place, and grant all their Petitions. Of which he gave two Demonstrations: One by Fire sent down from Heaven to consume the Sacrifices; the other by the glorious Cloud filling the whole House. By the former of these, the first Sacrifice that we read of in Scripture (that of Abel) it is generally thought was declared to be acceptable unto God, Gen. iv. 4. And when the Tabernacle was erected, and Aaron consecrated, there was the same Testimony given of God's Presence there, as here at the Consecration of the Temple, Levit. ix. 24. See what I have there noted, and in other Places. I shall only farther add, that the like miraculous Token of God's Acceptance was shewn, when Elijah contested with the Priests of Baal (1 Kings xviii.) and when David offered Sacrifice in the Threshing-floor of Araunah, 1 Chron. xxi. 26. which had Relation to what was now done: For David sacrificed in the very Place where the Temple was built; and therefore by both these Miracles God declared he would be worshipped in this Place. They differ only in this, that by the first God admonish'd David where the Temple should be built: And by this he approved and consecrated it when it was built. Dr. Jackson most judiciously adds, that thus was the Consecration of the Son of God to his eternal Priesthood confirmed by the Apparition of the Holy Ghost in a Flame of Fire; which was the Accomplishment of the Appearance of Aaron's Consecration, and of this at the Consecration of the Temple.

Ver. 2. *And the Priests could not enter into the House of the LORD, because the Glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's House.]* See Exod. xl. 35. and 1 Kings viii. 11. But another great Man (Dr. Alix) thinks it pertinent here to observe that there was no such thing in the second Temple: Tho' the Lord Christ was to appear in it, and make the Glory of the last House greater than the first. For the Appearance of the Flames of Fire on the Day of Pentecost, was not in the Temple, but in Jerusalem: When the Messiah was exalted to his heavenly Sanctuary, and the Temple devoted to Destruction by the Romans.

Ver.

Ver. 3. *And when all the Children of Israel saw how the Fire came down, and the Glory of the LORD upon the House,]* Here was a great Assurance, that God would be present in this Place, in that the Glory of the LORD not only filled the House; but appeared upon the House: So that all the People might see it, and not only have the Word of the Priests for it. By this they were satisfied, that it was God's House, where he would accept their Sacrifices, hear their Prayers, and bestow his Blessing upon them. There is no mention here made of the Cloud, as in the Book of the Kings: But that is comprehended, as *Abarbinel* observes, in the Glory and the Fire, which were in the Cloud. It came down at the first like a Cloud, and then broke out in such a Light and Splendor, as they were not able to behold: And a Flame came out upon the Altar, and consumed the Sacrifices that lay upon it.

They bowed themselves with their Faces to the Ground upon the Pavement, and worshipped,] They bowed down to the Middle of their Body, and fell prostrate upon the Floor, which was the most profound Adoration. These were two distinct Acts of Worship (bowing and falling flat on the Face) but here are joined together upon this great Occasion, as *Dr. Hyde* observes in his *Relig. Vet. Persarum*, Cap. 1. where he notes out of *Maimonides*, that the Pavement was kept very clean: It being unlawful for any one to come into the Court with their Shoes on their Feet, or so much as to spit there.

And praised the LORD, saying, For he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever.] They praised and gave Thanks to God (as they had great Reason to do, the Fire from Heaven and the Cloud of Glory being manifest Tokens of God's Presence among them) in the same Words which the Priests had used, who sung the eighty sixth Psalm. See ver. 13.

Ver. 4. *Then the King and all the People offered Sacrifices before the LORD.]* They had offered Sacrifices before; but now they renew them, and offer more in Acknowledgment of this Assurance of God's Love unto them.

Ver. 5. *And King Solomon offered a Sacrifice of twenty and two thousand Oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand Sheep:]* See 1 Kings viii. 63. where it is said, he offered only twenty thousand Oxen; which was a vast Number, but not incredible: Nor are these two Places inconsistent, as I have there shewn.

So the King and all the People dedicated the House of God.] Thus the Dedication of the Temple ended.

Ver. 6. *And the Priests waited on their Offices: the Levites also with Instruments of Musick of the LORD,]* They are called Musical Instruments of the LORD, because David had made them, as it here follows, to praise the Lord withal, because his Mercy endureth for ever. See 1 Chron. xv. 16.

When David praised by their Ministry:] For they sung the Psalm of Praise which he composed 1 Chron. xvi. 7, &c. In the Hebrew the Words are *behallil Dabid bejatham*, with the Hallel (that is, the Hymn of Praise) which David had put into their Hands, for that Purpose.

And the Priests sounded the Trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.] For that was the common Posture of Worship, whether in Prayer or Praises.

Ver. 7. *Moreover Solomon hallowed the Middle of the Court that was before the House of the LORD: for there he offered Burnt-offerings, and the Fat of the Peace-offerings, because the brazen Altar which Solomon had made, was not able to receive the Burnt-offerings, and the Meat-offerings, and the Fat.*

Ver. 8. *Also at the same time Solomon kept the Feast seven Days, and all Israel with him, a very great Congregation, from the entering in of Hamath, unto the River of Egypt.*

Ver. 9. *And in the eighth Day they made a solemn Assembly: for they kept the Dedication of the Altar seven Days, and the Feast seven Days.]* These Verses, and the next, are explained in 1 Kings viii. 64, 65, 66.

Ver. 10. *And on the three and twentieth Day of the seventh Month, he sent the People away into their Tents, glad and merry in Heart, for the Goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his People.]* The Targum thus glosses upon the last Words of this Verse, which expresses the Joy of the People, for the Goodness of the LORD, shewn unto David, in the opening of the Doors of the Sanctuary; and unto Solomon, whose Prayer God had accepted, and vouchsafed his glorious Presence, in the House he had built; and unto his People Israel, in his gracious Acceptance of their Sacrifices, and sending down Fire from Heaven to consume them.

Ver. 11. *Thus Solomon finished the House of the LORD, and the King's House: and all that came into Solomon's Heart to make in the House of the LORD, and in his own House, he prosperously effected.]* See 1 Kings ix. 1.

Ver. 12. *And the LORD appeared to Solomon by Night,]* See 1 Kings ix. 2.

And said unto him, I have heard thy Prayer, and have chosen this Place to myself for an House of Sacrifice.] As appeared by the Fire which came down from Heaven, and consumed the Sacrifice at the Consecration of this House.

Ver. 13. *If I shut up Heaven that there be no Rain, or if I command the Locusts to devour the Land, or if I send Pestilence among my People.]* Famine and Pestilence were two sore Punishments, wherewith God afflicted them for their Sins: And the former of them was caused sometimes by want of Rain, and sometimes by Locusts, who eat up what the Earth produced for their Sustenance.

Ver. 14. *If my People, which are called by my Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my Face, and turn from their wicked Ways: then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their Sin, and will heal their Land.]* He had petitioned for the Divine Favour and Clemency, upon no other Condition.

Ver. 15. *Now mine Eyes shall be open, and mine Ears attent unto the Prayer that is made in this Place.]* Some take these Phrases to signify, that he will always discern, whether they were such as they ought to be: But they rather have the same Sense with the next Verse, that he would have a gracious Respect to them, and

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te stify it by hearing their Prayers, as he desir'd, c. vi. 40.

Ver. 16. *For now I have chosen and sanctified this House, that my Name may be there for ever: and mine Eyes and mine Heart shall be there perpetually.]* See this explained 1 Kings ix. 3.

Ver. 17. *And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy Father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my Statutes and my Judgments.]* See there v. 4.

Ver. 18. *Then will I stablish the Throne of thy Kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy Father, saying, there shall not fail thee a Man to be Ruler in Israel.*

Ver. 19. *But if ye turn away, and forsake my Statutes and Commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other Gods, and worship them:*

Ver. 20. *Then will I pluck them up by the Roots out of my Land which I have given them; and this House which I have sanctified for my Name, will I cast out of my Sight, and will make it to be a Proverb, and a By-word among all Nations.*

Ver. 21. *And this House which is high, shall be an Astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this Land, and unto this House?*

Ver. 22. *And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their Fathers, which brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, and laid hold on other Gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this Evil upon them.]* This and the foregoing Verses are the same with those 1 Kings ix. 6, 7, 8, 9. and there have been explained.

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass (at the End of twenty Years, wherein Solomon had built the House of the Lord, and his own House)] See 1 Kings ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *That the Cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the Children of Israel to dwell there.]* This is a short Relation of what is more largely told in the Book of the Kings, c. ix. 12, 13. only here we are further informed, that these Cities being restored to Solomon, who had given them to Hiram, (who disliked them) Solomon built them so, that his own Subjects became the Inhabiters of them.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon went to Hamath-zobab, and prevailed against it.]* This Country lay between Euphrates, which was the Eastern Bounds of it; and Damascus, which was the Western, as Bochartus hath demonstrated in his Phaleg. Lib. ii. Cap. 7.

Ver. 4. *And he built Tadmor in the Wilderness,]* See an Account of this in the 1 Kings ix. 18.

And all the Store-Cities which he built in Hamath.] All the Cities wherein he laid up Provision for War, were in this Country of Hamath-zobab, as well as Tadmor.

Ver. 5. *Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced Cities with Walls, Gates, and Bars.]* Only one of these Cities is mentioned in the Book of the Kings, viz. the nether. But both of them were built before,

and he now only repaired, enlarged, beautified, and made them strong Places. See 1 Kings ix.

17.

Ver. 6. *And Baalath, and all the Store-Cities that Solomon had,]* That is, elsewhere as well as in the Land of Hamath.

And all the Chariot-Cities, and the Cities of Horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the Land of his Dominion.] See 1 Kings ix. 19.

Ver. 7. *As for all the People that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of Israel;*

Ver. 8. *But of their Children who were left after them in the Land, whom the Children of Israel consumed not; them did Solomon make to pay Tribute until this Day.*

Ver. 9. *But of the Children of Israel did Solomon make no Servants for Work: but they were Men of War, and Chief of his Captains, and Captains of his Chariots and Horsemen.]* These three Verses are the same with 1 Kings ix. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 10. *And these were the Chief of King Solomon's Officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare Rule over the People.]* How this agrees with the Book of the Kings, where 'tis said they were five hundred and fifty, see upon 1 Kings ix. 23.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon brought up the Daughter of Pharaoh out of the City of David,]* Where she first dwelt, 1 Kings iii. 1.

Unto the House that he had built for her:] See 1 Kings vii. 8.

For he said, My Wife shall not dwell in the House of David King of Israel; because the Places are holy whereunto the Ark of the LORD hath come.] All Houses into which the Ark had come, were not thereby made holy, for then the House of Obad-edom would have been so. But where it had been settled so long, as it had been in David's House, and had a Tabernacle made for it, there was a special Regard to the Place, where it had made its Abode: And Solomon would not suffer a Stranger (for so his Wife was, tho' profelyted) to keep her Court there. For 'tis not likely, she, and all her Servants had embraced the Law of Moses, though they had renounced Idolatry: And so might many ways defile a Place, which had been made sacred, by a divine Presence in it: Many other Reasons are given by Interpreters, to which I refer the Reader; and only add, that Abarbinel thought it sufficient to say, That it would have founded very ill, to hear the People say, That Pharaoh's Daughter dwelt where the Ark of God had inhabited. And he looks upon this as an Argument, that the Heart of Solomon continued hitherto right with God, and had no Intentions to commit those Sins he afterwards did: And therefore God at this time vouchsafed him the Gift of Prophecy.

Ver. 12. *Then Solomon offered Burnt-Offerings unto the LORD, on the Altar of the LORD, which he had built before the Porch:]* That is, he settled the daily Sacrifice at the Temple.

Ver. 13. *Even after a certain Rate every Day, offering according to the Commandment of Moses, on the Sabbaths, and on the new Moons, and on the solemn Feasts, three times in the Year; even in the*
Feast

Feast of unleavened Bread, and in the Feast of Weeks, and in the Feast of Tabernacles.] He first took Care the Law of *Moses* should be strictly observ'd, which prescrib'd what Offerings should be offered every Day, *Exod. xxix. 38, 39.* and at several other solemn Times, here mentioned. *Exod. xxiii. 14.* and other Places.

Ver. 14. *And he appointed according to the Order of David his Father, the Courses of the Priests to their Service, and the Levites to their Charges, to praise and minister before the Priests, as the Duty of every Day required:]* Next of all he took Care to confirm and establish the Orders which *David* had made, for the regular Attendance of the *Priests* and *Levites* upon the Service of God. Who were but few in the Days of *Moses*, in Comparison of what they were now; and therefore *David* disposed them so, that all Confusion might be avoided: And also assigned them new Employments, in singing the Hymns which he composed, and playing upon musical Instruments, whereby he made the Service of God more beautiful and cheerful. See 1 *Chron. xxiv, xxv.*

The Porters also by their Courses, at every Gate:] These Words shew that the Porters were distributed, into twenty four Courses, as well as the *Priests* and *Levites*: Though this Order of *David's* be not there expressly mentioned. See what I have noted upon 1 *Chron. xxvi. 27, 28.*

For so had David the Man of God commanded.] He is called by the Name of the *Man of God*, as *Moses* was: Because after *Moses* there was none like him, so divinely inspired, to raise the publick Worship of God, to a higher Pitch, by his heavenly Hymns; and to direct the Manner of its Performance in such Order, that God was served (if I may use here those Words of his) *in the Beauty of Holiness.* For tho' *Solomon*, as *Strigelius* observes, was a very wise Man in natural Knowledge, and in political Affairs, and in moral and divine Things: Yet he was much inferior to *David* in Piety, and in the Gift of Prophecy; as the Book of *Psalms* alone is sufficient to testify: In which there are so many glorious Predictions of the MESSIAH.

Ver. 15. *And they departed not from the Commandment of the King unto the Priests and Levites, concerning any Matter, or concerning the Treasures.]* Whatsoever had been ordered by *David* in all other Matters, *Solomon* settled them, and the *Priests* and *Levites* obeyed him.

Ver. 16. *Now all the Work of Solomon was prepared unto the Day of the Foundation of the House of the LORD, and until it was finished: so the House of the LORD was perfected.]* Care was taken, that there should be no Stop to the Building of God's House: Because all Materials were prepared before he began it; and every Thing projected how it should be done, in every Part of it.

Ver. 17. *Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the Sea-side in the Land of Edom.]* After he had finished all those great Works of the House of the LORD, and his own House, and built many Cities, as before recited; he designed to improve Navigation, which the *Jews* did not much understand. And for that End he went to these Places, on the Red Sea. See 1 *Kings ix. 26.* *Eloth* (as is ob-

served by the learned *Nic. Fuller* in his *Miscellanies*, Lib. iv. Cap. 20.) lay nearest to him, which appears from *Deut. ii. 8.* where we read that the *Israelites* passing by the Country of *Edom*, came first to *Eloth* and then to *Ezion*. But *Solomon* went first to *Ezion*, though further off, because there was *Ναυπηγιον*, the Place where Ships were built and fitted up: Which *Solomon* made Haste, with the greatest Diligence and Speed to inspect, and see in what Forwardness they were.

Ver. 18. *And Hiram sent him by the Hands of his Servants, Ships, and Servants that had Knowledge of the Sea; and they went with the Servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty Talents of Gold, and brought them to King Solomon.]* Besides those Ships which *Solomon* had built, *Hiram* sent more, who brought able Seamen with them to manage the whole Fleet. See there v. 27, 28. where only four hundred and twenty Talents are said to be brought: Of which I have there given an Account, and shewn it doth not disagree with this Place.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. **A**ND when the Queen of Sheba heard of the Fame of *Solomon*, she came to prove *Solomon* with hard Questions at Jerusalem, with a very great Company, and Camels that bare Spices, and Gold in abundance, and precious Stones: and when she was come to *Solomon*, she communed with him of all that was in her Heart.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told her all her Questions, and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.]* There is little in this Chapter, but what is related in 1 *Kings x.* where see concerning these two Verses, ver. 1, 2, 3. I shall only add, That the hard Questions she came to ask were not the curious Inquiries into the Secrets of natural Things, or new political Matters, but about Things pertaining to Piety, and the Service of God. For our Saviour saith, she came to hear the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and should therefore rise up in Judgment against that Generation, who would not learn of him: And in 1 *Kings x. 1.* it is said, the Fame she heard of *Solomon* was concerning the Name of the LORD: Which moved her to this Journey.

Ver. 3. *And when the Queen of Sheba had seen the Wisdom of Solomon, and the House that he had built,*

Ver. 4. *And the Meat of his Table, and the sitting of his Servants, and the Attendance of his Ministers, and their Apparel, his Cup-bearers also, and their Apparel, and his Ascent by which he went up into the House of the LORD; there was no more Spirit in her.*

Ver. 5. *And she said to the King, It was a true Report which I heard in mine own Land, of thine Acts, and of thy Wisdom.*

Ver. 6. *Howbeit, I believed not their Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had seen it: and behold, the one half of the Greatness of thy Wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the Fame that I heard.*

Ver. 7. *Happy are thy Men, and happy are these thy Servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom.]* All that is contained

tained in the foregoing *Verses*, is related in the same Words, (with very little Difference) in 1 Kings x. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 8. *Blessed be the LORD thy God; which delighted in thee, to set thee on his Throne, to be King for the LORD thy God:]* In these Words she says a great Deal more than is there related ver. 9. for she here calls the Throne of Israel, the Throne of the LORD, and acknowledges Solomon to be made King for the LORD his God; that is, not only to rule by his Authority, and as his Viceroy, but for his Glory, and to promote his Religion.

Because thy God loved Israel; to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do Judgment and Justice.] See upon 1 Kings ix. 9.

Ver. 9. *And she gave the King an hundred and twenty Talents of Gold, and of Spices great Abundance, and precious Stones: neither was there any such Spice as the Queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.*

Ver. 10. *And the Servants also of Hiram, and the Servants of Solomon which brought Gold from Ophir, brought Algum-trees and precious Stones.*

Ver. 11. *And the King made of the Algum-trees, Terrasses to the House of the LORD, and to the King's Palace, and Harps and Psalteries for Singers; and there were none such seen before in the Land of Judah.]* This and the two foregoing *Verses* are explained in 1 Kings x. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 12. *And King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all her Desire, whatsoever she asked, besides that which she had brought unto the King: so she turned, and went away to her own Land, she and her Servants.]* The last Clause concerning his Presents (*viz. besides that which she had brought unto the King*) is expressed much otherwise in 1 Kings x. 13. Where the Words are, *besides that which Solomon gave her of his Royal Bounty*; what is here explained to have been done, to requite her for the great Presents she had made the King.

Ver. 13. *Now the Weight of Gold that came to Solomon in one Year, was six hundred and threescore and six Talents of Gold.]* See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 14. *Besides that which Chapmen and Merchants brought: and all the Kings of Arabia, and Governors of the Country brought Gold and Silver unto Solomon.]* See there, ver. 14.

Ver. 15. *And King Solomon made two hundred Targets of beaten Gold, six hundred Shekels of beaten Gold went to one Target.*

Ver. 16. *And three hundred Shields made he of beaten Gold: three hundred Shekels of beaten Gold went to one Shield: and the King put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.]* See both this and the foregoing *Verses* there explained, ver. 16, 17.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, the King made a great Throne of Ivory, and overlaid it with pure Gold.*

Ver. 18. *And there were six Steps to the Throne, with a Footstool of Gold, which were fastened to the Throne, and Stays on each Side of the sitting Place, and two Lions standing by the Stays.]* These and the following *Verses* are explained in 1 Kings x. 18, 19, 20, 21. Where there are the same Words; only here is mention made of a Foot-

stool of Gold, which is not taken Notice of there.

Ver. 19. *And twelve Lions stood there on the one Side and on the other, upon the six Steps. There was not the like made in any Kingdom.*

Ver. 20. *And all the drinking Vessels of King Solomon were of Gold, and all the Vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure Gold, none were of Silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the Days of Solomon.*

Ver. 21. *For the King's Ships went to Tarshish with the Servants of Hiram: every three Years once came the Ships of Tarshish, bringing Gold, and Silver, Ivory, and Apes, and Peacocks.]* See 1 Kings x. 22.

Ver. 22. *And King Solomon passed all the Kings of the Earth in Riches and Wisdom.*

Ver. 23. *And all the Kings of the Earth sought the Presence of Solomon, to hear his Wisdom that God had put in his Heart.*

Ver. 24. *And they brought every Man his Present, Vessels of Silver, and Vessels of Gold, and Raiment, Harness and Spices, Horses and Mules, a Rate Year by Year.]* See of these *Verses*, 1 Kings x. 23, 24, 25.

Ver. 25. *And Solomon had four thousand Stalls for Horses and Chariots,]* See 1 Kings x. 26. and what I have noted there to make this Place and that agree together.

And twelve thousand Horsemen, whom he bestowed in the Chariot-Cities, and with the King at Jerusalem.] See there. It is evident that in David's Time they had no Horses: For Absalom, when he had lost the Battle (wherein he perished) rode upon a Mule, to make his Escape, and David ordered his own Mule to carry Solomon to be anointed. And indeed the Country did not produce them: But Solomon, being able to make great Expences, had them brought out of Egypt, and maintained this Number of Chariots, which resembled those of the Grecians; that is, they were small with two Wheels apiece, carrying a Man or two standing or leaning forward. The following Kings could not be at this Charge, but upon this Occasion sent for Succour from Egypt, and then mention is always made of their Horses.

Ver. 26. *And he reigned over all the Kings, from the River, even unto the Land of the Philistines, and to the Border of Egypt.]* That is, they were Tributaries to him. See 1 Kings iv. 26.

Ver. 27. *And the King made Silver in Jerusalem as Stones,]* This is an hyperbolical Expression, signifying such Abundance of it, as exceeded all Belief.

And Cedar-trees made he as the Sycomore-trees, that are in the low Plains, in Abundance.] This is a wild Fig-tree, with which those Countries abound; bearing Fruit not unlike to Figs, but much sweeter, and have no little Seeds in them; and being not so good as others are little esteemed, but commonly sold only to the poorer Sort of People, as Leon Rauwolf informs us in his Travels, Part I. Chap. 4.

Ver. 28. *And they brought unto Solomon Horses out of Egypt, and out of all Lands.]* Such as Cappadocia, which was famous for a noble Breed of Horses. See 1 Kings x. 28. But Egypt is here especially mentioned, because it was nearer, and no Place afforded more. From whence,

even till the Captivity, they fought for Supplies, as appears by Zedekiah's sending Ambassadors to Egypt, requesting Horses from thence, Ezek. xvii. 15.

Ver. 29. *Now the rest of the Acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the Book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the Prophecy of Abijah the Shilonite, and in the Visions of Iddo the Seer, against Jeroboam the Son of Nebat?*] In the first Book of the Kings it is only said, that his Acts were written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon. See chap. xi. 41. But here we are told the particular Books wherein they were recorded. And the last of these Authors (viz. Iddo) wrote also the Acts of Rehoboam, c. xii. 15. of this Book: And some suppose he lived till the Time of Asa, c. xv. 1. where he is called Obed. Howsoever that be, it appears, by this, that the Prophets, as I noted before, were also Historians, who gave an Account of what passed in their Times; out of whose Work this short History was extracted. And Abarbinel is of Opinion, that there were two Books or Catalogues written of the Acts of Solomon: One *de rebus prioribus*, of what passed in the Beginning of his Reign, giving an Account of his great Buildings, and of the Splendor wherein he lived, and the Prosperity he enjoyed; and these were written by Nathan: The other, *de rebus posterioribus*, giving an Account of what passed in the latter End of his Life; how he doted upon Women, and fell into Idolatry, and was threatened with terrible Punishments, and had several Adversaries raised against him, &c. which were all written by Abijah the Shilonite. And some of these Things were also recorded by another Author, Iddo; who wrote concerning the Acts of Jeroboam, which could not be related, without touching upon some Part of Solomon's Reign. These three did not join to make one Book, but severally and distinctly gave an Account of such Things as occurred to their Knowledge: Out of which it is probable, Ezra took many Things, which he hath supplied in this Book.

Ver. 30. *And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel, forty Years.*

Ver. 31. *And Solomon slept with his Fathers, and he was buried in the City of David his Father, and Rehoboam his Son reigned in his Stead.*] These two Verses are the last Words of 1 Kings xi. 42, 43.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. **A**ND Rehoboam went to Shechem, for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him King.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass when Jeroboam the Son of Nebat (who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the Presence of Solomon the King) heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.*] See 1 Kings xii. where this Chapter is so fully explained, that little is to be added here.

Ver. 3. *And they sent and called him:]* The Targum well translates it, *for they sent*, giving a Reason why he returned from Egypt.

So Jeroboam and all Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying;

Ver. 4. *Thy Father made our Yoke grievous, now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous Servitude of thy Father, and his heavy Yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.*] This Verse is the same in Sense with 1 Kings xii. 4. and so are those that follow, with those that follow there; where see them explained. I shall only add, that if this Complaint of Solomon's hard Usage of them was true, it is probable that when he was corrupted by the Love of Money and strange Women, and fell into Idolatry, he also oppressed his Subjects; being unable to maintain such great Expences, and so many Wives and Concubines, and building them Places for Religious Worship (besides other Things before-mentioned) put him unto, without greater Treasures than he had heaped up to support them. At least they began to be exhausted, which tempted him to these ill Courses to keep them full.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three Days. And the People departed.*] The rest of this Chapter is so much the very same, not only in Sense, but also in Words, with what we had before in the Book of the Kings, that I shall not transcribe it.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the House of Judah and Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen Men which were Warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the Kingdom again to Rehoboam.

Ver. 2. *But the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the Man of God, saying,*

Ver. 3. *Speak unto Rehoboam the Son of Solomon King of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,*

Ver. 4. *Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your Brethren: return every Man to his House, for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the Words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.*] These four Verses I have explain'd in my Notes upon 1 Kings xii. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 5. *And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built Cities for Defence in Judah.*] That is, he strengthened his Frontiers against the ten Tribes that were revolted from him.

Ver. 6. *He built even Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,*

Ver. 7. *And Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam,*] We are told in 1 Chron. iv. 32. that Etam was a Town in the Tribe of Simeon: Therefore this shews that some Portion of that Tribe adhered to the House of David, after Jeroboam made this Rent in the Kingdom.

Ver. 8. *And Gath, and Maresbah, and Ziph,*

Ver. 9. *And Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah,*

Ver. 10. *And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah, and in Benjamin, fenced Cities.*] It is apparent from hence, that by building Cities of Defence, ver. 5. is meant only repairing, and fortifying them: For they were built before, but perhaps he now enlarged some of them, and made them more capacious.

Ver.

Ver. 11. *And he fortified the strong Holds, and put Captains in them, and Store of Viſtual, and of Oyl and Wine.]* Theſe ſtrong Holds, I ſuppoſe, were in the Heart of his Country, which he furniſhed with good Garrifons and Proviſions; that they might be able to maintain a Siege, in Caſe their Enemies ſhould make an Irruption into his Country.

Ver. 12. *And in every ſeveral City he put Shields and Spears, and made them exceeding ſtrong, having Judah and Benjamin on his Side.]* Who were two warlike and valiant Tribes, by whoſe Aſſiſtance he made every one of theſe Cities a Magazine; out of which, upon Occaſion, Soldiers might be furniſhed with Arms: Which was a neceſſary Precaution in doubtful Times, for the Preſervation of his Kingdom.

Ver. 13. *And the Priests and the Levites that were in all Israel, reſorted to him out of all their Coaſts.]* So the Tribe of Levi was added to the Tribe of Judah; tho' not all the Cities wherein they dwelt: Which they were forced to leave, when they would not conform to the idolatrous Worſhip, which Jeroboam had ſet up. The Tribe of Simeon likewise was ſo intermixed with Judah, that, in all Probability, more Cities of it beſides that before-mentioned, if not all, became one Body with it; which made Judah a very powerful Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *(For the Levites left their Suburbs, and their Poſſeſſion, and came to Judah and Jeruſalem: for Jeroboam and his Sons had caſt them off from executing the Priests Office unto the LORD.)* After the right Manner, according to the Law of Moſes. For they reſuſed to offer Sacrifices before his Calves in Dan and Bethel; and he would not let them go to do their Duty at Jeruſalem, the Place which the LORD had choſen; and therefore they left their Dwellings and Poſſeſſions, and went to live there. He mentions Jeroboam's Sons as well as himſelf; becauſe they were his principal Counſellors, and Aſſiſtants in the Change he made in Religion.

Ver. 15. *And he ordained him Priests for the High Places, and for the Devils, and for the Calves which he had made.)* See 1 Kings xii. 28, 29, &c. A new Religion being ſet up by Jeroboam, deviſed out of his own Head, wherein he ordained a Solemnity in the eighth Month, which was not of God's Inſtitution, all that he did was prophane; the Priests prophane, the Feaſts prophane; and ſo were the Sacrifices and the whole Worſhip. And therefore he calls (as Bochartus well obſerves) the Objects of their Worſhip, Devils and not Gods: And the Miniſters of this Religion he calls not Cohen Priests, but Chemarim, Hoſea x. 5. And their Solemnities, inſtead of the Feaſt of God, he calls the Day of their King, Hoſea vii. 5. (becauſe inſtituted by their King, and not by God) and the Place of Worſhip, inſtead of Beth-el he calls Beth-aven, (Hoſea x. 5, 8.) that is, not the Houſe of God, but the Houſe of Wickedneſs, or of Idolatry. For the Ointment (as he ſpeaks) being turned into deadly Poiſon, the Inſcription ought not to remain upon the Pot or Box, wherein it was contained. See his Hierozoicon, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 34. p. 357. There is a late Writer indeed (*Antonius van Dale*) who la-

hours to perſuade us, that the Word *Seirim* (which we tranſlate *Devils*) ſignifies no more than *Goats*; which were worſhipped in *Egypt*: From whence *Jeroboam* lately coming brought this Worſhip along with him. But who can think the *Iſraelites* would have been drawn to adore ſo filthy a Creature? Which was worſhipped by the *Egyptians*, as ſeveral other hairy Creatures were, and the Image of them held in great Veneration, (*Pan* being repreſented below in that Form) as *Bochartus* hath obſerved: Yet ſignified alſo *Dæmons*, which appeared in that Shape. Thus the ancient Interpreters, the *Chaldees*, the *Syriack*, the *Arabick*, and all the *Jews* underſtand it, as the ſame learned Man hath largely ſhewn, in the ſame Book, Lib. ii. Cap. 53. pag. 643.

Ver. 16. *And after them out of all the Tribes of Israel, ſuch as ſet their Hearts to ſeek the LORD God of Israel, came to Jeruſalem, to ſacrifice unto the LORD God of their Fathers.]* The good Example of the Priests and Levites moved many pious People to quit their Habitations and Eſtates, rather than forſake, or not have the Exerciſe of their Religion.

Ver. 17. *So they ſtrengthened the Kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the Son of Solomon ſtrong, three Years: for three Years they walked in the Way of David and Solomon.]* Though the Number of People that came to him out of all the Tribes, added great Strength to Rehoboam's Kingdom; yet his Power was chiefly owing unto God: Who protected and aſſiſted them, as long as he and his People continued in the Way of his Predeceſſors, *David* and *Solomon*. From which laſt Words ſome conclude *Solomon* was a Penitent, becauſe he is mention'd here as an Example of true Piety, as well as *David*. But it cannot be certainly inferred hence, becauſe this may relate only to the greateſt Part of his Reign, before he laſed in his old Age, and forſook the Law of Moſes. The Book of *Eccleſiaſtes* is a better Proof of it, which the *Jews* generally think, was written when he was old: Wherein he ſenſibly expreſſes the Vanity of all Earthly Things; and particularly ſpeaks with great Detestation of bad Women, by whom he had been ſeduced, *Eccleſ. vii. 26*. Here it is to be obſerved, that the Corruption of Judah and *Iſrael* began in the fourth Year of Rehoboam, (ſee xii. 1.) and from thence begin the three hundred and ninety Years of their Iniquity, mentioned by *Ezekiel*, iv. 5. which laſted to the Siege of Jeruſalem by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Ver. 18. *And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the Daughter of Jerimoth the Son of David, to Wife,]* We never read of *Jerimoth* among the Sons of *David*, but only here. Some think he was by a Concubine who is not named.

And Abibail the Daughter of Eliab the Son of Jeſſe.] His Grand-Daughter; for he was *David's* eldeſt Brother.

Ver. 19. *Which bare him Children; Jeſuſh and Shamariah, and Zabam.]* He ſpeaks, I ſuppoſe, of the latter of theſe Wives, who bare him theſe Children.

Ver. 20. *And after her he took Maachab the Daughter of Abſalom, which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.]* This Wife was his firſt Couſin (as we call ſuch Perſons) being

the Daughter of his Uncle: If this be meant of *Absalom* the Son of *David*. But it is evident this was another Person of the same Name, of *Gibeah*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, (xiii. 2.) whereas *Absalom* the Son of *David* was of *Judah*.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboam loved Maachab the Daughter of Absalom above all his Wives; and his Concubines: (for he took eighteen Wives; and threescore Concubines, and begat twenty and eight Sons, and threescore Daughters.)* So great was their Desire of having Abundance of Children in those Days, that they intrenched upon the Law of God, who commanded their Kings should not multiply Wives. But *David* indulged himself in it, and *Solomon* a great deal more: And so did *Rehoboam*, and *Abijah*, who had both of them a numerous Issue. For Virginitie in those Days was not accounted a Virtue: And the greatest Unhappiness in a married Estate was Barrenness.

Ver. 22. *And Rehoboam made Abijah the Son of Maachab the chief, to be Ruler among his Brethren:* He was his eldest Son by his beloved Wife, whom he put in Authority over all the rest which he had by her, and by his former Wives.

For he thought to make him King. Such Power, I have observed before, they then challenged: And in order to it, he seems to have committed unto *Abijah* the Management of all Affairs, under himself.

Ver. 23. *And he dealt wisely, and dispersed all his Children throughout all the Countries of Judah and Benjamin,* Upon which Words *Kimchi* glosses very well: He thought seriously of this Thing, and fearing a Rebellion, broke all his Sons, (that is, did not suffer them to live together) and dispersed them into all Parts of the Country under his Government, that he might confirm the Kingdom in the Hand of his Son *Abijah*. Thus *Abraham* anciently sent his Sons which he had by *Keturah* into other Countries, that they might not be troublesome to *Isaac*, who he intended should be his Heir: And thus *Jehoshaphat* did in following Times after this, xxi. 3.

Unto every fenced City: Of which, I suppose, he made them Governors in Chief, and committed a great Care to them: These Cities being frontier Places, as I observed v. 5. where it is probable, he had trusty Persons to watch and observe them, that they entred not into any Combinations to defeat his Design.

And he gave them Victual in Abundance: He provided for them amply, that they might not be discontented, but live at their Ease.

And he desired many Wives. This might possibly be for his Children, that they might in their several Governments live very pleasantly. But, considering his Temper, most Interpreters think it was for himself; being not satisfied with those Wives he had already, but still desiring more.

C H A P. XII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass when Rehoboam had established the Kingdom, and had strengthened himself, When he thought himself safe, and out of all Danger.

He forsook the Law of the LORD, His evil Inclinations began to appear; which he deriv'd, it is likely, from his Mother, who was an *Ammonitess*. See 1 Kings xiv. 21.

And all Israel with him. See 1 Kings xiv. 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, that in the fifth Year of King Rehoboam, Shishak King of Egypt came up against Jerusalem (because they had transgressed against the LORD,)* See 1 Kings xiv. 25. Their Apostasy was in the fourth Year of his Reign; (after they had been three Years obedient, xi. 17.) therefore God speedily corrected them, that he might reduce them to his Service, before they were settled in their Impiety.

Ver. 3. *With twelve hundred Chariots, and threescore thousand Horsemen: and the People were without Number,* That is, the Footmen in his Army.

That came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims; the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians. There is no doubt, the *Lubims* were the People of *Libya*, a famous Country in *Africa*, adjoining to *Egypt*. And the *Sukkiims* are the People called *Troglodytes*, who lived near the *Red Sea*; and had that Name *Troglodytes*, because they dwelt in *τρῳγλαῖς*, in Caves and Dens of the Earth: Which is the very Signification of the Hebrew Word *Succha*; which in that Language imports not only *Tabernacles*, but also *Caves* or *Dens*, as in *Psalms* x. 9. *Job* xxxviii. 40. From this People there was a Town, upon the Coast of the *Red Sea*, called *Succhæ*; and at this Day, with a little Alteration *Suachen*, as *Bochartus* observes in his *Phaleg*. Lib. iv. Cap. 29. As for the People called *Cush* (which we translate *Ethiopians*) they were either those to the South of *Egypt*, or the *Scenitæ* in *Arabia*: For I have observed elsewhere, it was a Name common to both. See the same most learned Author in the same Book, Cap. 33.

Ver. 4. *And he took the fenced Cities which pertained to Judah,* Where the Sons of *Rehoboam* were Governors: Who perhaps there perished.

And came to Jerusalem. The frontier Towns being taken, nothing hindered his coming hither: For trusting to his fenced Cities, he had raised no Army to oppose *Shishak*: Or if he had, they durst not oppose his Progress.

Ver. 5. *Then came Shemaiah the Prophet to Rehoboam, and to the Princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak,* As to a Place of more Safety than the Country; or perhaps to consult what to do, in a Time of so great Danger.

And said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the Hand of Shishak. The *Chaldee* translates this, *ye have forsaken my Fear*, that is, his Worship, and turned to Idols: Therefore God gave them up into the Power of an Idolater.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon the Princes of Israel,* They are called the *Princes of Israel*, because there were many *Israelites* among them; and they had all lately been comprehended under this Name.

And the King humbled themselves, and they said, The LORD is righteous. Sorrowfully confessed, that

that the LORD had most justly punished them for their Sins.

Ver. 7. *And when the LORD saw, that they humbled themselves; the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some Deliverance, and my Wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the Hand of Shishak.]* Their Humiliation prevailed with God so far, that he moderated his Anger, and respited the Destruction which was coming upon them; promising he would not suffer Shishak to do so much Mischief, as he designed. Yet he seems to intimate, that if they went on to provoke him, he would use some other Hand to ruin them.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, they shall be his Servants; that they may know my Service, and the Service of the Kingdoms of the Countries.]* He resolved to let them feel the Difference between him and all other Lords and Masters: And how much more happy they were while they continued to worship and serve him, than when they fell under a foreign Yoke.

Ver. 9. *So Shishak King of Egypt came up against Jerusalem,]* Which was basely yielded up to him, ἀμαχνη, without striking a Stroke, as *Dionysius Halicarnass.* speaks; who is thought by learned Men to have Respect to this Place, when he saith, that *Sesostris* made an Expedition into Palestine, Λαβὼν ἀμαχνη τὰς ἀνθρώπους ἐν αὐτῷ, taking all the Men there without fighting. And it was to be ascribed only to the great Goodness of God, that he did not possess himself absolutely of the whole Country, and make it a Province subject and tributary to the King of Egypt. For unless God had diverted him, he might have done what he pleased; it being in his Power to extirpate the Jewish Nation.

And took away the Treasures of the House of the LORD, and the Treasures of the King's House, he took all: he carried away also the Shields of Gold which Solomon had made.

Ver. 10. *Instead of which King Rehoboam made Shields of Brass, and committed them to the Hands of the Chief of the Guard, that kept the Entrance of the King's House.*

Ver. 11. *And when the King entred into the House of the LORD, the Guard came and fetcht them, and brought them again into the Guard-Chamber.]* These three Verses have been explained in 1 Kings xiv. 25, 26, 27, 28. Only from hence may be gathered, that the Golden Shields were made for State, to be used by his Guard when they attended him to the House of the LORD: This being the Use of the brazen Shields which were made in their stead.

Ver. 12. *And when he humbled himself, the Wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether:]* When he saw his Danger he humbled himself, before Shishak came to Jerusalem: And after he had taken and ransacked it, he humbled himself still more; and thereby diverted that utter Destruction, which such an Army might have brought upon him, and which their Sins deserved. For it appears by the Language of the Prophet, God was most highly provoked by the Defection of Judah so suddenly from him, to pour out his Wrath upon them.

And in Judah Things went well:] They began again to prosper. But the Words in the Hebrew being, there were good Things in Judah, they may be understood of the Reformation made in the whole Kingdom: Many good Things being found among them, in the midst of their Corruption. For the Priests, I suppose, kept up the Worship of God in its Purity, and many good People joined in it: Especially such as had fled from the Idolatry of Jeroboam.

Ver. 13. *So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned:]* He repaired the fenced Cities, which Shishak had taken; and recovered so much Strength, that he reigned with some Authority.

For Rehoboam was one and forty Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen Years in Jerusalem, the City which the LORD had chosen out of all the Tribes of Israel, to put his Name there: And his Mother's Name was Naamah, an Ammonitess.] See 1 Kings xiv. 21.

Ver. 14. *And he did Evil, because he prepared not his Heart to seek the LORD.]* This seems to signify, that after his Humiliation for his Sins, he relapsed again into them, (tho' it may relate to his first Provocation) and the Reason is here given, because his Heart was not intent (as the Targum expounds it) to seek Instruction from the LORD.

Ver. 15. *Now the Acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the Book of Shemaiah the Prophet,]* Which was extant when Ezra made this short Abstract out of it. For Prophets, as I observed before, wrote the History of their own Times; as *Jarchi* says, they did their own Prophecies.

And of Iddo the Seer, concerning Genealogies?] The Targum hath it, *Genealogies of the House of David:* Which he set down in the History he wrote of Things done in his Time.

And there were Wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.] See 1 Kings xiv. 30.

Ver. 16. *And Rehoboam slept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David; and Abijah his Son reigned in his stead.]* As he had designed in his Life-time. See xi. 22, 23.

C H A P. XIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW in the eighteenth Year of King Jeroboam, began Abijah to reign over Judah.] See 1 Kings xv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he reigned three Years in Jerusalem: (his Mother's Name also was Michaiah the Daughter of Uriel of Gibeah,)]* He gives a different Account above, ix. 20, 21. for there his Mother is called Maachab, and her Father's Name is said to be Absalom: And so we read, 1 Kings xv. 2. The Targum therefore, to reconcile these two Places, add a long Gloss, in these Words, Because she was his legal Wife, her Name was changed from Maachab to Michajah, which was a more honourable Name: And the Name of her Father chang'd into Uriel, that no mention might be made of the Name of Absalom. But this Reason is frivolous, for she is said to be the Daughter of Absalom in the Place above-named. Therefore a better Account of this is given by *Jarchi* and by *Kimchi*, who

who say, that her intire Name was *Michaiab Maachab*; and her Father's entire Name was *Uriel Absalom*. See what I have noted upon *1 Kings xv. 2.*

And there was War between Abijah and Jeroboam.] 1 Kings xv. 7.

Ver. 3. *And Abijah set the Battle in Array, with an Army of valiant Men of War, even four hundred thousand chosen Men: Jeroboam also set the Battle in Array against him, with eight hundred thousand chosen Men, being mighty Men of Valour.]* Here was such a vast Army brought into the Field, that the whole Strength of both Sides was engaged in the Controversy, about the restoring the Kingdom of *Israel* to the House of *David*, who had but half the Number of Men that was on *Jeroboam's* Side; but thought they had the better Cause, and seemed by *Abijah's* Speech to have put such Trust in God for Succour, that they doubted not of Success.

Ver. 4. *And Abijah stood upon Mount Zemaraim, which is in Mount Ephraim,]* It seems *Abijah* had entred into the Country of the *Israelites*, and there drew up his Army, on the Hill afterwards called *Samaria*.

And said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel.] A great many might hear his Voice, from so advantageous a Place; but all the eight hundred thousand could not. But he desired what he said might be reported to them; and it is very likely he desired a Parley before they fought, to see if they could accommodate Matters without shedding Blood.

Ver. 5. *Ought you not to know,]* They did know, but he means they ought to consider and acknowledge.

That the LORD God of Israel gave the Kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and his Sons by a Covenant of Salt?] See concerning this Expression, *Covenant of Salt*, *Num. xviii. 19.* The *Targum* here expounds it, *as the Waters of the Sea*, which never alter their Saltness. But it rather signifies a solemn Covenant made by Sacrifice, which was always salted, *Levit. ii. 13.*

Ver. 6. *Yet Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, the Servant of Solomon the Son of David, is risen up, and has rebelled against his Lord.]* Tho' he had the Warrant of a Prophet to take the Kingdom; yet his own Ambition first led him to it; as we may gather from *1 Kings xi. 27.*

Ver. 7. *And there are gathered unto him vain Men, the Children of Belial,]* Such, one would think, his principal Partakers were, who so easily changed their Religion, that it shewed they regarded neither God nor Man: As the Word *Belial* signifies. See my *Notes* upon *1 Kings xii. 24.* And here it may be further noted, that the high Offenders of all Sorts are called by the Name of *Children of Belial*. As those ungodly Men, who like a Torrent came upon *David* with all Manner of Violence, are called the *Floods of Belial*, *2 Sam. xxii. 5.* and the sacrilegious Sons of *Eli*, *1 Sam. ii. 12.* and the filthy Beasts of *Gibeab*, *Judges xix. 22.* and blood-thirsty Men, *2 Sam. xvi. 7.* and perjur'd Persons, *1 Kings xx. 10.* and pernicious Counsellors, *Nahum i. 11.*

And have strengthened themselves against Rebo-

boam the Son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young,] He was one and forty Years old when he came to his Kingdom; but not bred up to military Affairs, in which he was raw, and unexperienced, in a Time of long Peace.

And tender-hearted.] This doth not so much aggravate their Crime, as reflect upon his Father, who wanted Courage, as this Phrase signifies. But if we take it in this Sense, *Abijah* overshot himself: For *Rehoboam* gathered a great Army, and would have fought, if God, by his Prophet, had not forbidden him. And if that was his Meaning, that he had a tender Regard to God's Commands, and yielded immediately to them, he spake the Truth; for he was fearful then to offend God, and so could not withstand them, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And now ye think to withstand the Kingdom of the LORD, in the Hand of the Sons of David:]* But he would not have them think, that God would always be of that Mind, and let them quietly enjoy what they had usurped. For the Kingdom which he governed was not set up by such vain Persons as advanced *Jeroboam*; but the LORD himself; whom they should not be able to withstand.

And ye be a great Multitude;] Or, tho' you be far more in Number than we; being two to one, *ver. 3.*

And there are with you golden Calves, which Jeroboam made you for Gods.] It may be better translated, *but there are with you, &c. i. e.* you have forsaken the LORD, and worshipped other Gods (for so the golden Calves were esteemed by God) and therefore your vast Forces will do you no Service.

Ver. 9. *Have you not cast out the Priests of the LORD, the Sons of Aaron and the Levites,]* This they could not deny, whatsoever they might pretend against the Charge of forsaking the LORD.

And have made you Priests after the Manner of the Nations of other Lands?] Without any Regard to the Family they were of, and out of any Part of the Country. See *1 Kings xii. 31.*

So that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young Bullock and seven Rams,] Any one that could make this Expence might consecrate himself to be a Priest.

The same may be a Priest of them that are no Gods.] The *Targum* expresses it thus, *is the Priest of him that is not the WORD of the LORD.* By which it appears (as from innumerable other Places) the Divine WORD was the God of *Israel*, worshipped in the most holy Place.

Ver. 10. *But as for us, the LORD is our God,]* So it follows in the *Targum*, *unto us the WORD of the LORD is our Helper, he is our God.*

And we have not forsaken him:] Not quite departed from him; tho' in some Part *Abijah* (who spake these Words) had done Evil in the Sight of the LORD, as his Father had done; and his Heart was not perfect with God, *1 Kings xv. 3.*

And the Priests which minister unto the LORD are the Sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their Business.] The Service of God was orderly

derly performed in his House, by such only as were appointed to it by himself.

Ver. 11. *And they burn unto the LORD every Morning and every Evening, Burnt-sacrifices and sweet Incense: the Shew-bread also set they in Order upon the pure Table, and the Candlestick of Gold, with the Lamps thereof, to burn every Evening:]* There was nothing omitted, either Day or Night, which the Law required: And he mentions these Things thus particularly, that he might put the *Israelites* in mind how the Worship of God was with great Solemnity kept up in *Judah*, which in some Years the *Israelites* had not seen, and perhaps had forgot. But he mentions here only one Candlestick and its Lamps, because, as some think, *Shishak* had carried away the rest; or, rather, because *Solomon* had made the other ten Candlesticks for Ornament, so that they had not Lamps in them every Night, which burnt only in the great Candlestick made by *Moses*, from Evening until Morning. See *Levit. xxiv. 2, 3.*

For we keep the Charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.] The Targum here again thus expresses it, *We keep the Charge of the WORD of the LORD our God.* This gives us reason to think, that *Abijah* kept up the publick Worship of God very regularly: Tho' he did Evil in the Sight of the LORD privately.

Ver. 12. *And behold, God himself is with us for our Captain, and his Priests with sounding Trumpets to cry alarm against you:]* Upon the sounding of which *Moses* promised they should be remembered before the LORD, and saved from their Enemies, *Numb. x. 9.* This seems to be added as an Amplification of their strict Observance of the Law of God in all Things, in War as well as in Peace, which gave them a good Hope that he would be with them. And here it may be noted, that it doth not appear, that the Priests were forbidden any Functions in a Civil Life: For they went to War, and performed the Office of Trumpeters in the Army, as well as in the Temple.

O Children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your Fathers, for you shall not prosper.] So he concludes his Speech, that if they fought, it was not so much against him, as against the LORD whom their Fathers worshipped and they had forsaken, and therefore should not succeed. None of the great Captains and Commanders, whose Speeches are recorded in Heathen Authors, ever spoke more movingly than this King of *Judah* did.

Ver. 13. *But Jeroboam caused an Ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the Ambushment was behind them.]* We read of no Answer to this Speech; but *Jeroboam* seems to have been so much touched with it, that he would not trust to his Numbers, but used Policy, and like a great Captain, laid an Ambush behind the Army of *Judah*, while he faced them with his main Body, drawn up in Battle Array: For he had such a prodigious Multitude with him, that he had Men enough to spare upon any Design, and more than enough to fight also.

Ver. 14. *And when Judah looked back,] Hearing a great Noise, it is like, behind them.*

Behold, the Battle was before, and behind:] Which put them into fore Distress.

And they cried unto the LORD, and the Priests sounded with the Trumpets.] They were not dismayed, but implored Help from God; which the Priests gave them Hopes to obtain. For the Sounding with the Trumpets, was an imploring of the Divine Aid, which God had promised (as I before noted) when they sounded.

Ver. 15. *Then the Men of Judah gave a Shout:]* To terrify their Enemies, by this Token of their Confidence, that they should have the Victory.

And as the Men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.] This is thus expressed by the Targum, when the Alarm sounded, the WORD of the LORD caused *Jeroboam* and all *Israel* to fall, and to be slain by *Abijah*. For to smite, commonly signifies in Scripture Language to kill.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their Hands.]* They seem not to have struck a Stroke, but to have been so dismayed, that they run away; and in the Chase were slain in vast Numbers.

Ver. 17. *And Abijah and his People slew them with a great Slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel, five hundred thousand chosen Men.]* This is the greatest Slaughter that we ever read of in any Story, as *Bochartus* observes: But it is not incredible, when we consider that God fought for them, and chastised the Idolatry of the *Israelites* to such a Degree, that the *Jews* killed an hundred thousand of them, more than they had in their own Army. So *Josephus* also long ago observes, that there never was such a Slaughter heard of, either among the *Greeks* or *Barbarians*.

Ver. 18. *Thus the Children of Israel were brought under at that Time,] Very much humbled, but not made subject to the House of David.*

And the Children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their Fathers.] It was not by their own Valour that they obtained this great Victory; but by their leaning (or relying) upon the WORD of the LORD God of their Fathers, as the Targum expresses it.

Ver. 19. *And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took Cities from him,] He followed his Blow (as we speak) and did not content himself with beating them in the Field, but pursued the *Israelites* into their Country, and possessed himself of some of their Cities.*

Beth-el with the Towns thereof,] From whence, it is likely, Jeroboam removed the Golden Calf, unto some Place of greater Safety: Or else the Destruction of it would have been mentioned.

And Jeshanah with the Towns thereof, and Ephraim with the Towns thereof.] There was a City, as well as a Tribe call'd *Ephraim* (*John xi. 54.*) which some think was the same with *Opbrah*.

Ver. 20. *Neither did Jeroboam recover Strength again in the Days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died.]* Some have made it a Doubt, who it is of whom it is said that God struck him. And in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. *xxi.* the *Jews* say it was *Abijah*: For *Jeroboam* lived a long

long Time, but *Abijah* reigned only three Years: God not granting him a longer Life, because of his Ingratitude for so great a Victory; or as others will have it, because, when he took *Bethel* he did not destroy nor carry away the Golden Calf, but let it remain, altho' he had reproached the *Israelites* with it, *ver.* 8. But it is uncertain, as I said, whether it was there when the City was taken: And the next Verse plainly shews, that *Abijah* while he lived was mighty: And therefore it was *Jehoram* who was struck, and died a Year or two after this Blow. And as long as he lived, after this Defeat, some think he was full of Anguish, and such Pain in his Bowels, as *Jeroboam* had, *c.* xxi. 19. Thus *Abarbinel*, and many others.

Ver. 21. But *Abijah* waxed mighty, and married fourteen Wives, and begat twenty and two Sons, and sixteen Daughters.] Not after this Victory, but before he was King, in the Time of his Father; for he lived not long after this Success.

Ver. 22. And the rest of the Acts of *Abijah*, and his Ways, and his Sayings, are written in the Story of the Prophet *Iddo*.] In the Targum it is, they are written in the Midrash of the Prophet *Iddo*: That is, in his Commentary, as we translate the Hebrew Word here, in the Margin of our Bible. See *c.* xii. 15. This King was a very wise Man, (as appears by the excellent Oration above-mentioned) and in familiar Conversation drop'd many remarkable Sayings, like the Proverbs of *Solomon*, which *Iddo* thought worthy to be recorded and transmitted to Posterity.

C H A P. XIV.

Ver. 1. **S**O *Abijah* slept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City of David, and *Asa* his Son reigned in his Stead: in his Days the Land was quiet ten Years.] There was no War declared, but only some private Bickerings between his Subjects and *Baasha's*. See *1 Kings* xv. 16.

Ver. 2. And *Asa* did that which was good and right in the Eyes of the LORD his God.] See concerning this Verse and the next, in *1 Kings* xv. 11, 12.

Ver. 3. For he took away the Altars of the strange Gods, and the High Places, and brake down the Images, and cut down the Groves.] By this it appears, that tho' *Abijah* maintained the publick Worship of God (as I observed *c.* xiii. 11.) yet there were also strange Gods worshipped in some Places.

Ver. 4. And commanded *Judah* to seek the LORD God of their Fathers, and to do the Law and the Commandment.] I suppose he set forth Royal Edicts, requiring the People to worship the LORD alone, and to observe all the Laws of *Moses*.

Ver. 5. Also he took away out of all the Cities of *Judah*, the High Places] There were High Places in the open Fields (mentioned before, *ver.* 3.) and also in the Cities, which were all taken away by him.

And the Images:] In the Hebrew the Sun-Images, as we translate it in the Margin. Certain it is, that the Word *Hammanim* imports

something belonging to the Sun, which *Buxtorf* renders *Solares Statuæ*, Sun-Statues; because, saith *Jarchi*, they were set on the Tops of Houses, and so exposed to the Sun: Whence *Junius* and *Tremellius* called them *Subdiales Statuæ*; but *Abarbinel* thinks they were in the Form of the Sun, made after the Similitude of that Globe, and worshipped by those who took the Sun for their God. Others think they were Temples built for the Worship of the Sun: Which the *Vulgar Latin* follows.

And the Kingdom was quiet before him.] No Body made Opposition to him.

Ver. 6. And he built fenced Cities in *Judah*:] On the Frontiers of his Kingdom.

For the Land had rest, and he had no War in those Years, because the LORD had given him rest.] The Targum thus explains it, because the Land of *Israel* rested, neither did they more war against him in those Years: That is, the *Israelites* and their King made no Attempt upon him, nor endeavoured to vindicate the late great Loss they had received, by the singular Providence of God over him. But the meaning may rather be, that the Land of *Judah* (which he is speaking of) which had hitherto endeavoured to reduce the ten Tribes to the Obedience of the House of *David*, now attempted nothing, nor was assaulted by them or others.

Because the Lord had given him Rest.] Of which he made this good Use, in providing for War in the Time of Peace.

Ver. 7. Therefore he said unto *Judah*, Let us build these Cities, and make about them Walls and Towers, Gates and Bars,] But he shewed his Wisdom in this also, that he did not go about this Work without the Advice of his Counsel, and the Elders of *Judah*.

While the Land is yet before us:] Which the Targum thus expounds, while the Inhabitants of the Land are subdued to us. Or, as *Jarchi*, while the Kingdom is established before us. That is, while it is in our Power, as this Phrase signifies.

Because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every Side: so they built and prospered.] None gave him the least Disturbance, till he had finished his Works.

Ver. 8. And *Asa* had an Army of Men that bare Targets and Spears, out of *Judah* three hundred thousand, and out of *Benjamin* that bare Shields and drew Bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand, all these were mighty Men of Valour.] He was provided also of a great Army, if there were any Occasion to use it, as well as of Places of Defence. Some think he raised these Men after he heard *Zerah* intended an Invasion upon him: But it rather signifies his great Care to have an Army in Readiness, when he saw no Danger of any Enemy.

Ver. 9. And there came out against them *Zerah* the Ethiopian,] King of the *Arabians*, as *Cush* here signifies: And must necessarily be so understood in *c.* xxi. 16. and *2 Kings* xix. 9. See what I have there noted. And *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, L. iv. Cap. 2. where he shews they were a very powerful Nation.

With an Host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred Chariots, and came to Marehab.] A City upon the Borders of Judah, Josh. xv. 44.

Ver. 10. *Then Asa went out against him, and they set the Battle in Array in the Valley of Zepharthath at Marehab.] He did not stay till he entered his Country; but went to fight him upon the Frontiers of it.*

Ver. 11. *And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said,] Before he began to fight, he implored the Help of Heaven: Which he did; I suppose, in the Face of all his Army, that they might look up to God as their Strength and Salvation.*

LORD, it is nothing with thee to help; whether with many, or with them that have no Power:] Or, as the Targum renders it, there is none besides thee, who helpest both the Strong and the Weak.

Help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude:] In the Targum it is, we rely upon thy WORD, in the Name of thy WORD we go forth: That is, by his Authority, in Confidence of his Power, and in the Defence of his Kingdom and Religion.

O LORD, thou art our God, let not Man prevail against thee.] Nothing could more inspire them with Courage, than to believe, he look'd upon their Cause as his own, while they owned him for their God.

Ver. 12. *So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.] As the Israelites had done not long before, c. xiii. 15.*

Ver. 13. *And Asa and the People that were with him, pursued them unto Gerar:] This was a City of the Philistines, who, it's likely, were their Allies, and Confederates in this War.*

And the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves, for they were destroyed before the LORD, and before his Host:] The Victory was so intire, that they could not rally their Forces to renew the Fight. It is not said what Number were slain, but the Word destroy signifies that very many perished: For they fought against the LORD, and his Host, who made a great Destruction among them.

And they carried away very much Spoil.] From the Men that were slain in the Field of Battle, and those that run away and left their Baggage behind them: For he speaks in the next Verses of the Spoil of their Cities, and of the Fields about them.

Ver. 14. *And they smote all the Cities round about Gerar,] Into which it is likely the Ethiopians fled.*

For the fear of the LORD came upon them:] Seeing so vast an Host defeated, they had no Courage to defend themselves.

And they spoiled all the Cities, for there was exceeding much Spoil in them.] Partly by their own Riches, and partly by the Booty which the Ethiopians afforded them.

Ver. 15. *They smote also the Tents of Cattle, and carried away Sheep and Camels in Abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.] The Abundance of Camels which they had, shew they were Arabians; and the Scenitæ and Nomades (as Bo-*

chartus observes) did not live all the Year in the open Air, but had Tents both for themselves and their Cattle in Winter-Time. And they that dwelt in Tents, are opposed to those who lived in the open Field; who are said ἀγροῦ λαῖν. Thus Esau and Jacob are distinguished; the former of which is said to be a Man of the Field; and the other to dwell in Tents, Gen. xxv. 27.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the Son of Oded.] Some think he was also called Oded, ver. 8. but had the Name of Azariah given him; to distinguish him from his Father.*

Ver. 2. *And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin, The LORD is with you,] As appear'd by the late glorious Victory, they had obtained by his Help, c. xiv. 13.*

While ye be with him:] While you continue to worship him alone.

And if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.] He would not have them presume of his continued Favour, if they forsook his Worship and Service: And therefore admonishes them to stick close to him; otherwise he would forsake them. The Targum thus expresses it, the WORD of the LORD is your Helper, while you walk in his Ways, &c.

Ver. 3. *Now for a long Season Israel hath been without the true God,] The Targum explains it very clearly, there have been many Days, since the House of Israel departed from the House of David, because of Jeroboam: In which they have not worshipped the true God, but the Golden Calves.*

And without a teaching Priest, and without Law.] For all the Priests were gone into the Land of Judah: And the Israelites neglected the Study of the Law, as the Targum explains the last Words. But there are a great Number of learned Men, who will have these Words, and those that follow, relate to the Times of the Judges; when they were more manifestly in such a Condition as is here described. And truly Campegius Vitringa hath learnedly asserted this Opinion, in his Book De Synagoga Veteri, Pars II. L. i. Cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *But when they in their Trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.] If we follow the common Interpretation, which respects the present and future State of Israel, these Words should thus be translated, If in their Trouble they had turned, &c. they should have found him.*

Ver. 5. *And in those Times there was no Peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great Vexations were upon all the Inhabitants of the Countries.] We do not read of such Troubles hitherto in the Kingdom of Israel; therefore the Words must be translated, In those Times (if they continue to displease God) there shall be no Peace, &c. No Quiet, no Safety, but they shall be infested both by external Wars, and intestine Discords. Which was fulfilled,*

filled, as we find in their History, 1 Kings xv, xvi, &c.

Ver. 6. *And Nation was destroyed of Nation; and City of City:]* These Words also must be translated in the future Tense; *Nation shall be destroyed of Nation; &c.* Where by *Nation* is meant Tribe: One of which fought against another, in those Times, when there was no certain settled Succession in the Kingdom; but who-soever killed their King, hoped to make a Party to help him to get into the Throne.

For God did vex them with all Adversity.] For God shall set them one against another, with mutual Slaughters, and all those Evils that accompany Civil Wars. The *Targum* here again translates it; *the WORD of the LORD, &c.*

Ver. 7. *Be ye strong therefore, and let not your Hands be weak:]* To root out Idolatry; which had brought such Calamities upon the *Israelites*, and would still bring more.

For your Work shall be rewarded.] As they might learn from their late great Victory over Idolaters.

Ver. 8. *And when Asa heard these Words, and the Prophecy of Oded the Prophet,]* A short Expression, being as much as *the Son of Oded the Prophet*. Tho' some think the Father prophesied, as well as the Son, and foretold the same Calamities; the more to awaken them, and confirm them in the Belief of what *Azariah* said.

He took Courage,] This explains the foregoing Words, *be strong therefore*, to be meant of an undaunted Resolution to abolish Idolatry: Which required great Courage, when so many were addicted to it, and had practised it both in the Days of *Rehoboam* and *Abijah*.

And put away the abominable Idols out of all the Land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the Cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim,] Or which had been taken, viz. by *Abijah*.

And renewed the Altar of the LORD that was before the Porch of the LORD.] At the Entry of the Court of the Priests.

Ver. 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the Strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: (for they fell to him out of Israel in Abundance,]* Tho' the *Simeonites* had their Portion out of the Tribe of *Judah*, when the Land was divided by *Joshua*; yet it appears from hence, as well as from other Places, that they joined themselves to the rest of the *Israelites*, when the Kingdom was rent by *Jeroboam*. But now great Numbers of them came over to *Asa*: Which they might easily do, for one Side of their Tribe adjoined to *Judah*, as the other to *Dan*.

When they saw that the LORD his God was with him,)] The *Targum* here again renders it, When he saw *the WORD of the LORD* was his Helper.

Ver. 10. *So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem, in the third Month, in the fifteenth Year of the Reign of Asa.]* This seems to have been a voluntary Assembly by common Agreement, rather than by the King's Commandment or Invitation: Unless we suppose it to have been at one of the great Festivals when they were bound by God to go up to *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 11. *And they offered unto the LORD the same Time,]* In the Hebrew, in that *Day*; which the *Targum* takes to have been in the *Feast of Weeks*, which in the *New Testament* is called *Pentecost*; which was kept in the third Month, called *Sivan*.

Of the Spoil which they had brought,] From *Zerah*, and from the Cities they took about *Gerar*.

Seven hundred Oxen; and seven thousand Sheep.] Which they offered besides the appointed Offerings at the Feast. And they seem to have been partly Burnt-offerings, in Acknowledgement of God's Goodness for their great Victory, and partly Peace-offerings, in eating of which they made the following Covenant.

Ver. 12. *And they entered into a Covenant to seek the LORD God of their Fathers, with all their Heart, and with all their Soul;]* Engaged themselves by a solemn Oath to worship the LORD alone, and professed to do it sincerely, and with intire Affection to him. But this doth not signify that *Asa* had no Fault: For it appears by the next Chapter, that he had a great many.

Ver. 13. *That whatsoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel, should be put to death,]* If any Body did either publicly or privately worship any other God, they agreed the Sentence of the Law should be executed upon him, which was Death, *Deut. xvii. 2.*

Whether small or great, whether Man or Woman.] That is, without any Respect to Persons; no Consideration being had of any one's Dignity, nor the Weakness of their Sex moving Pity and Compassion.

Ver. 14. *And they swore unto the LORD with a loud Voice, and with Shouting, and with Trumpets, and with Cornets.]* These were Expressions of the Joy, mentioned in the next Verse, wherewith they took this Oath. The Difference between *Trumpets* and *Cornets*, it is not worth enquiring after: The former seem to have been made of Metals, the other of Horns or Wood.

Ver. 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the Oath:]* The main Body of the People. And tho' there might be some Idolaters secretly lurking among them, yet they all gave those outward Tokens of their Joy, to see the Worship of God thus established.

For they had sworn with all their Heart, and sought him with their whole Desire,] That is, they professed to do this most sincerely and heartily; and many of them, no doubt, did at that time resolve to worship God alone, tho' afterward they apostatized from him.

And he was found of them: and the LORD gave them Rest round about.] They reaped the happy Fruit of this Reformation, in the great Peace which they enjoyed, without Disturbance from any of their Neighbours.

Ver. 16. *And also concerning Maachab the Mother of Asa the King,]* His Grand-Mother, as the *Targum* observes: It being usual in Scripture to call such their Parents, *Exod. ii. 18.*

He removed her from being Queen,] This was a great Testimony of the Uprightness of this King, that he would not suffer such a near Relation to retain her Idols, or any Authority: His

His Love to God overcometh his Affection to his Parents. See 1 Kings xv. 13. *Jacobus Capellus* thinks this stirred up *Baasha* to make War upon him; for having liv'd peaceably with him a long Time, upon this he broke out into Hostility. *Histor. Sacra & Exot. ad Annum Mundi* 3053.

Because she had made an Idol in a Grove:] Or rather, an *Asherah*, or *Astarte*, for so *Laashe-rab* is translated by the LXX. And, in all Probability, *Astarte*, the famous Goddess of Syria, was the Deity which was worshipped by *Maachab*, as Mr. *Selden* observes in his *de Diis Syris*, Syntagm. ii. Cap. 2. And thus *Abarbinel* upon *Jerem.* xlv. makes *Asherah* to be the same with the Queen of Heaven there mentioned, viz. the Moon.

And Asa cut down her Idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the Brook Kidron.] He destroyed it with the utmost Contempt, 1 Kings xv. 13.

Ver. 17. *But the high Places were not taken away out of Israel:]* It is said twice in the foregoing Chapter, that he did take away the high Places, ver. 3 and 5. But that was of Judah: Whereas out of the Territories he had conquered in the Land of Israel, we are here informed, he was not able to remove them. Or else the Meaning is, that he gave Orders for the taking them away every where; but they were not obeyed: Or, as others think, he took away those high Places that were for the Service of other Gods; but let those alone where the true God alone was worshipped.

Nevertheless the Heart of Asa was perfect all his Days.] He heartily hated all idolatrous Worship, as long as he lived.

Ver. 18. *And he brought unto the House of God the Things that his Father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, Silver, and Gold, and Vessels.]* See upon 1 Kings xv. 15.

Ver. 19. *And there was no more War unto the five and thirtieth Year of the Reign of Asa.]* That is, as some interpret it, there was no War with the Ethiopians, or such like People; tho' with *Baasha* he had perpetual War, 1 Kings xv. 16. But *Jacobus Capellus* in the Place above-named, would have the Words thus translated, *There was no War in the Kingdom of Asa, till the thirty fifth Year*, viz. of the Kingdom of Israel, not of Judah, or Asa: For this was the thirty fifth Year after *Jeroboam* rent the Kingdom from the House of David. In which he follows *Torniel-lus*; as he doth *Beroaldus* and *Junius*, tho' he would not vouchsafe to name them; but more of this in the Beginning of the next Chapter.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. **I**N the six and thirtieth Year of the Reign of Asa, *Baasha King of Israel* came up against Judah,] The War was begun in the Conclusion of the five and thirtieth Year; and in the Beginning of the six and thirtieth he made this Invasion. But this disagrees so much with what is said in 1 Kings xv. 33. that Interpreters labour hard to reconcile them; for by that Place it appears, that *Baasha* began his Reign in the third Year of Asa, and reigned no more than four and twenty Years: From whence it follows, that he was dead, nine or ten Years before the thirty sixth Year of Asa.

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It is a short Way of solving this which *Josephus* seems to take, *Lib. viii. Ant. Cap. 6.* by supposing a Mistake in the Transcriber from the Original Copy, in which it was not the six and thirtieth of Asa's Reign, but the six and twentieth, which was the last Year of the Reign of *Baasha*; who died, he thinks, immediately after *Benhadad* had defeated his Intentions of building *Ramah*; but most think this too bold a Supposal; and therefore I gave in few Words another Account of this Difficulty in my Notes upon 1 Kings xvi. 8. viz. that this was the six and thirtieth Year since the Division of the Kingdom, after the Death of Solomon, when Israel was rent from Judah: For so many Years were now past since that Time; viz. twenty Years in the Reign of *Rehoboam* and *Abijah*, and fifteen of Asa's Reign, when many of the Israelites came to him, (xv. 10.) Thus *Sedar Olam Rabba*, *Ralbag*, *Abarbinel* also, with a great Number of eminent modern Writers, both Protestants and Papists; such as *Junius*, *Piscator*, *Cocceius*, *Jacobus Capellus*, *Lightfoot*, *Mariana*, *Torniellus*, *Sanctius*, *Salianus* and *Petavius* himself, with many others. It is not said indeed, that *Baasha* came up in the thirty sixth Year of the Kingdom of Judah, but in that Year of the Reign of King Asa: But they make Account, that the Kingdom of Judah and of Asa were all one, and so they might easily be put one for the other. And whereas it is objected, That the Scripture is not wont to reckon the Years of any King from any other Term, but the Time wherein he began to reign; they produce an Example to the contrary from 2 Sam. xv. 7. where *Abshalom* is said to have gone to Hebron in the End of forty Years, and there conspired against his Father; which Years *Sedar Olam* reckons from the Beginning of the Kingdom, or the Inauguration of *Saul*. And our Dr. *Lightfoot* alledges another Instance in the thirty sixth Chapter of this Book, v. 9. where *Jehoiachin* is said to be eight Years old, when he began to reign; that is, said he, in the eighth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar*: For he was eighteen Years old, as appears from 2 Kings xxiv. 8. But this Difference, I think, may be better reconciled another Way, as I shall observe on that Place. I shall here only add, that as this is the most ancient Way of solving this Difficulty, so they that go another are forc'd to suppose, that these Words do not relate to the Beginning of the Reign of Asa, but to something else; for Instance, to the Beginning of his Wars with Israel, which *Kimchi* endeavours to make out; but I shall not trouble the Reader with it, for many good Men think *Josephus* in the Right.

And built Ramah,] That is, made a Wall about it, and fortified it.

To the Intent that he might let none go out, or come in to Asa King of Judah.] The late Defection of so many of his Subjects, as fell from him to the House of David (xv. 9.) was the Occasion of setting a strong Guard in this Place, which was the Passage between the Dominions of Israel and Judah, 1 Kings xv. 17.

Ver. 2. *Then Asa brought out Silver and Gold, out of the Treasures of the House of the LORD, and of the King's House, and sent to Ben-hadad King of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,]*

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This is a little more largely related in 1 Kings xv. 18. See my Notes there.

Ver. 3. *There is a League between me and thee, as there was between my Father and thy Father: behold, I have sent thee Silver and Gold; go, break thy League with Baasha King of Israel, that he may depart from me.*

Ver. 4. *And Ben-hadad hearkened unto King Asa, and sent the Captains of his Armies against the Cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the Store-Cities of Naphtali.*

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his Work cease.*

Ver. 6. *Then Asa the King took all Judah, and they carried away the Stones of Ramah, and the Timber thereof; wherewith Baasha was a building, and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.]* These four Verses are the very same (with small Variation) with those in 1 Kings xv. 19, 20, 21, 29. See my Notes there.

Ver. 7. *And at that Time Hanani the Seer came to Asa King of Judah, and said unto him,]* Here follows a remarkable History added to what we read in the Book of the Kings: Which relates the great Weakness of Asa in his declining Years, and God's Displeasure at it.

Because thou hast relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God,] Who had promised great Victories to him, by the Prophet Azariah, if he did well, xv. 7.

Therefore is the Host of the King of Syria escaped out of thine Hand.] Whom God would have overthrown, as he did the Ethiopians, if they had continued their League with Baasha, and come to his Assistance against Asa. But now the Syrians were reserved to be a Scourge to his Family.

Ver. 8. *Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge Host, with very many Chariots and Horsemen?]* See xiv. 9. By the Lubims are meant the People of Libya, or the Africans beyond Egypt; who are sometimes in Scripture called Phut, and sometimes Lubim, from the Arabick Word Lub, which signifies dry or thirsty, as Bochartus observes: For such was the Country which this People inhabited, Terra sitiens, (as Lucian calls it) a thirsty Land. They are noted by Authors to have had abundance of Horsemen and Chariots, in which they fought, as Xenophon tells us. And Herodotus saith, the Greeks learnt from them τειραρετας ἵππων ζευγύνας, to yoke four Horses together to draw a Chariot.

Yet because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine Hand.] See xiv. 11. The Words of Conradus Pellicanus upon this Verse are so pious, that I think fit to transcribe them. "Asa committed a triple Offence; in "distrusting the Goodness of God for Help, "and calling to his Aid an Infidel and impious "King; when he had lately had such an Experiment of God's Clemency in his Triumph "over the King of Ethiopia. Nothing offends God so much as Distrust in his Goodness toward the Faithful; as an entire Faith "and Confidence in his Mercy pleases him above all Things. Upon which Account David was so highly in his Favour, tho' otherwise guilty of sundry Crimes."

Ver. 9. *For the Eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in the Behalf of them, whose Heart is perfect towards him.]* He exercises a most watchful Providence over those throughout the whole World, who sincerely commit themselves unto him, and depend upon him in well-doing, and will not fail to protect them. For these Words, as Mr. Mede observes, are of the same Import with those in the Prophecy of Zechariah, iv. 10. where the seven Eyes of the LORD are said to run to and fro thro' the Earth; which took such Care of that one Stone which Zerubbabel had laid for the Foundation of the Temple, that the Work could not be disappointed, but should certainly at length be finished, Par. i. Discourse 10.

Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore from henceforth thou shalt have Wars.] The Heart of Asa is said to have been perfect all his Days, in the foregoing Chapter, v. 17. And so it was in the Matter of the outward Worship of God at the Temple; of which he was there speaking. But in the latter End of his Life he was defective in his inward Trust and Confidence in God: Which is called Foolishness; both because it was a sinful Thing, and very pernicious. For God exposed him to his Enemies, as a Punishment for relying on Man more than his Friendship.

Ver. 10. *Then Asa was wroth with the Seer,]* This was still a greater Sin, to be so angry with his Reprover (tho' he had his Commission from God) as to put him in Prison. But Anger is no good Adviser; and when Men forget God, they are not themselves.

And put him in a Prison House;] In the Stocks which were in the Prison, as Tremellius translates it, in domum cippi.

For he was in a Rage with him, because of this Thing.] For which he ought to have thanked, and rewarded him.

And Asa oppressed some of the People at the same Time.] He enslaved them; as the Targum translates it; that is, in the latter Part of his Reign he grew something tyrannical, and no Wonder, when he relied not upon God, but upon human Power, and was full of Pride and Passion.

Ver. 11. *And behold, the Acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the Books of the Kings of Judah and Israel.]* Not in these Books of the Kings which we have in the Bible: But in those written by the Prophets, mentioned xii. 15.

Ver. 12. *And Asa in the thirty and ninth Year of his Reign, was diseased in his Feet until his Disease was exceeding great:]* He had the Gout; which increased to such an Heighth, that he died of it, as Pellicanus thinks: Which was a just Punishment upon him, for putting the Prophet's Feet in the Stocks. *Ut per id quod peccaverat, per id puniretur;* That his Offence might be seen in his Punishment.

Yet in his Disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the Physicians.] It was not a Fault that he desired the Help of Physicians; but that he trusted to their Skill, more than to the Goodness and Power of God; which he did not implore, but continued in his former Fault, of putting Confidence in Man. And so Grotius thinks, he did not sin in seeking Help from the Syrians, but in trusting to them more than God, and

and hiring them with Things consecrated to God, *Lib. ii. De Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. xv. Sect. 9.* An excellent Person whom I have often mentioned (*Dr. Alix.*) is of Opinion, that these Physicians were Heathens; for we never read of any before in the sacred Story, but among the *Egyptians*: And the Heathen Physicians in those Days were a sort of Charmers.

Ver. 13. *And Asa slept with his Fathers, and died in the one and fortieth Year of his Reign.*

Ver. 14. *And they buried him in his own Sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the City of David,]* In the Hebrew the Words are, they buried him in his Sepulchres; the Plural Number being used, as many think, for the Singular; which is frequent in the Scripture: But the Words rather respect the Form of their Monuments in that Nation, which contained many Sepulchres: That is, several Cells wherein dead Bodies were laid. And it is likely, he made one for himself, which he added to the rest of the Sepulchres in that Vault, or Monument.

And laid him in the Bed, which was filled with sweet Odours, and divers Kinds of Spices prepared by the Apothecaries Art:] To all his other Offences he added this Vanity, (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) that he ordered his Body to be buried after the Manner of the *Gentiles*, rather than like the People of God: Tho' it must be confessed, it was an ancient Custom to embalm Bodies, which was used in the Burial of *Jacob*. But what is here related doth not seem to be meant of any thing done to the Body, but to the Bed on which it lay; which, among the *Romans*, was very stately for great Persons. See *Suetonius* in the Life of *Julius Cæsar*, *Cap. 84.* For the Heathens were wont to burn their Goods with them, to serve them in the other World.

And they made a very great Burning for him.] The *Greeks* and *Romans* burnt dead Bodies; throwing Frankincense, Myrrh, Cassia, and other fragrant Things into the Fire: And these in such vast Quantity, that *Pliny* represents it as a Piece of Profaneness, to bestow such Heaps of Frankincense upon a dead Body, when they offered it to their Gods by Crumbs, *Lib. xii. Nat. Hist. Cap. 18.* But the *Israelites* had no such Custom; but from the ancient *Egyptians* perhaps learnt the Custom, not of burning Bodies, but of burning many Spices at their Funerals; as we find not only here, but at the Funeral of *Jehoram*, *c. xxi. 9.* and of *Zedekiah*, *Jerem. xxxiv. 5.* *Kimchi* here says, that they burnt the Bed on which they lay, and other Household-Stuff, that none might have the Honour to use them when they were gone.

If we may believe what the *Jews* say in *Juchasin*, when *Gamaliel* the Son of *Simeon*, the Grand-child of *Hillel* (at whose Feet *St. Paul* sat) was buried, *Onkelos* burnt seventy Pound of Frankincense upon his Sepulchre. But this is a Fable invented to raise the Credit of the *Targum* of *Onkelos*, which was not known till many Ages after. But the best of the *Jews* believe this burning of sweet Spices and Woods was first intended, merely to prevent the Offence which the Smell of dead Bodies might possibly sometimes give. But the Vanity of

some Men made them exceed beyond Necessity.

C H A P. XVII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *Jehoshaphat* his Son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against *Israel.*] The first Thing he did after he came to the Crown, was to put his Kingdom in a good Posture of Defence, against the King and People of *Israel*; who had given Disturbance to his Father, *xvi. 1, &c.*

Ver. 2. *And he placed Forces in all the fenced Cities of Judah, and set Garisons in the Land of Judah, and in the Cities of Ephraim, which Asa his Father had taken.]* He fortified his frontier Cities, and increased the Garisons in the rest of the Country, and in those Cities which his Father took from *Israel*. We do not read indeed of any Cities that *Asa* took, but *Abijah* possessed himself of several, which *Asa* kept and took for his own, *xiii. 19.* and *Jehoshaphat* put such Forces in them as might secure them to himself.

Ver. 3. *And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat,]* The *Targum*, according to the usual Language of that Paraphrast, saith, *The WORD of the LORD was his Helper.*

Because he walked in the first Ways of his Father David,] Before he committed those foul Sins, in the Matter of *Urijah*; but some read it, *of his Father, and of David*, for *Asa* in the Beginning of his Reign was very pious, as *David* was. And thus it is some Reflection upon *Asa*, for his Offences in the latter End of his Life: His Son being noted to have followed him as he was in his first Days, not in his old Age.

And sought not unto Baalim.] Which were the Gods worshipped in all the Eastern Countries round about them.

Ver. 4. *But sought the LORD God of his Father, and walked in his Commandments, and not after the Doings of Israel.]* As he worshipped not the Gods of other Countries, so he did not join with the *Israelites* in worshipping God by the Calves.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the LORD established the Kingdom in his Hand, and all Judah brought up Jehoshaphat Presents,]* As they used to do in those Countries, in the Beginning of their King's Reign. See *1 Sam. x. 27, 28.* and *1 Kings x. 25.*

And he had Riches and Honour in Abundance.] Riches procure Men Honour, when they make such a good Use of them, as he did.

Ver. 6. *And his Heart was lift up in the Ways of the LORD:]* He had very generous Resolutions, as *Strigelius* renders it, to promote the true Worship of God, and all Goodness; his Mind being raised above all Fear and Discouragement.

Moreover, he took away the high Places and Groves out of Judah.] The Meaning is plain, that those high Places wherein they sacrificed to Idols, he destroyed, as *Asa* had done in the Beginning of his Reign; but in the latter End, some had restored them again. There is no need therefore of their Amendment, who fancy that anciently instead of *Veoth*, moreover, there was

was *Velo*, he did not; that so it may agree with 1 Kings xxii. 43. and with the *twentieth* Chapter of this Book, v. 33. As if the Meaning was, that tho' he was courageous above all that had been before him; yet the People were so accustomed to Sacrifices in high Places, that he durst not take them away. This is true, that where they offered to the true God, he did not take them away; but those wherein Idols were worshipped were abolished.

Ver. 7. *Also in the third Year of his Reign, he sent to his Princes, even to Ben-bail, and to Obadiab, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the Cities of Judah.*] He sent some that were of his Counsel, to see the People taught; by removing all Impediments, and making the People come to hear the *Priests* and the *Levites*; for it had been to little Purpose to take away their Idols, if they had not been withal better instructed: And the *Priests* and the *Levites* would not have had much Authority among the People, if they had not been back'd by such great Persons as are here mentioned. *Grotius* indeed will have it, that these great Men did themselves instruct the People: For, as the *Jews* observe, it was not proper to the *Priests* and *Levites*, but all learned Men might teach the People; and these who were of the King's Counsel were certainly learned in the Law. But the two next Verses tell us, that *Priests* and *Levites* were sent along with them, *who taught in Judah*; and therefore I take the Meaning to be, that *Jehoshaphat* being very desirous to have the People understand their Duty, took this singular and extraordinary Course to send some *Princes*, together with the *Priests* and *Levites*, upon this weighty Business: The latter, that they might teach the People, the former to see them do it carefully, and require the People to come and receive Instruction, and to be obedient to what they heard. Thus *Jarchi* and other Interpreters explain it; *It belonged to the Priests and Levites to inform the People of their Duty, as it is written, Deut. xxiv. 8. and these political Persons went along with them, to quicken the People to hear them, and compel them to obey them, and do according to their Commands.* See *Nehem. viii. 9.* *Campegius Vitringa* hath a long Discourse to this Purpose in his *Synag. Vet. Par. ii. Lib. i. Cap. 9.* where he takes this to be an Indication that the People in those Times had little solemn publick Instruction; and thinks it a good Proof that there were no Synagogues in the Country in those Days, as there were in After-times, wherein the People were constantly instructed in the Sense of the Divine Law. *Mr. Thorndike* indeed rightly observes, that the Words of *Moses*, *Deut. xxiv. 8.* are not rightly alledged by *Jarchi* to this Purpose; but there is another Place, *Deut. xvi. 18.* from whence he also concludes (*Religious Assemblies*, p. 23.) that this Teaching consisted in declaring the Obligation of the Law by the Judges of it, the *Priests* and *Levites*; and the Princes were Officers with Power to enforce the Execution of it. See *Malachi ii. 7.*

Ver. 8. *And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asabel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and*

Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites.] These, no doubt, were eminent Men among the *Levites*, as the two *Priests Elishama*, and *Jehoram* were, who were joined with them.

Ver. 9. *And they taught in Judah, and had the Book of the Law of the LORD with them,*] That they might teach with the greater Authority, by reciting the very Words of that sacred Book. But from hence *Vitringa* argues, that the Books of *Moses* were scarce among the People in those Days: For if there had been then publick Synagogues, wherein the Law had been read (as it was afterward, every Sabbath-day) there had been no need of carrying a Copy of the Law with them; which they might have had in every Synagogue.

And went about throughout all the Cities of Judah, and taught the People.] Which is too plain an Argument, that there were not settled Teachers in every City; who on all Occasions instructed the People: Nor doth it appear by this History, that these great Men who were sent to see the People instructed, settled such constant Teachers in every City, to instruct them when they were gone. The *Priests* and *Levites*, no doubt, were ready to teach the People in their Cities where they dwelt: And there is good Reason to think, that most Part of the Prophets, who were the great Instructors of the People, were *Priests* and *Levites*. But it is as certain, that the Charge of teaching the People belonged to those Prophets who were not *Priests* and *Levites*, as much as to those that were, as *Mr. Thorndike* observes in the same Place.

Ver. 10. *And the Fear of the LORD fell upon all the Kingdoms of the Lands, that were round about Judah, so that they made no War against Jehoshaphat.*] God took care to prevent any Disturbance, while they were about this pious Work, by striking a Terror into all their Neighbours; who, it is likely, were sensible, that it was in vain to assault them, while they continued firm in their Religion. For they could not but observe how much their Prosperity depended on that; and that they never fell into their Enemies Hands, but when they fell off from God.

Ver. 11. *Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat Presents, and Tribute Silver;*] They were so far from giving him any Disturbance, that some of his Neighbours complimented him by Presents, and voluntarily paid their Tribute; which, it is likely, they had neglected in the Time of some of his Predecessors; tho' imposed on them by *David*, who had conquered the *Philistines*.

And the Arabians brought him Flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred Rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred He-goats.] The Riches of the *Arabians* consisted in Cattle, as *Fuller* observes out of *Strabo* and *Pliny*, in his *Miscellanies*, Lib. iii. Cap. 16. And the Scripture informs us, how they abounded in both sorts of Flocks here mentioned, *Isaiah lx. 7. Ezek. xxvii. 21.* And these perhaps were their Tribute, they having been brought under the *Jews*: Or rather their Present, by which they sought *Jehoshaphat's* Friendship, and put themselves under his Protection.

Ver.

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Ver. 12. *And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah Castles, and Cities of Store.]* He built very strong Towers (as *Jarchi* understands it) and Cities wherein he laid up Provisions of Wine and Corn.

Ver. 13. *And he had much Business in the Cities of Judah:]* To settle Religion, and purge out Idolatry; as well as to provide for their Safety, by Fortifications, and whatsoever was necessary for the Preservation of publick Tranquillity.

And the Men of War, mighty Men of Valour, were in Jerusalem.] He kept the principal Officers in his Army near to himself; that he might advise with them upon any Emergency.

Ver. 14. *And these are the Numbers of them according to the House of their Fathers: of Judah, the Captains of Thousands; Adna the Chief, and with him mighty Men of Valour, three hundred thousand.]* He mentions only the Commanders in Chief; under whom were a great Number of Captains of Thousands, and Captains of Hundreds, who are not named.

Ver. 15. *And next to him was Jehohanan the Captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.]* In the Hebrew, (as it is noted in the Margin) the first Words are, *at his Hand* was, &c. Which may seem to import, that he was Lieutenant-General (as we speak) to the former great Man, who assists him in the Management of that Army. But the following Words plainly signify, that he was another Commander in Chief, having under him a great Body of Men, tho' not equal to the former. And as the *Targum* translates the first Words (whom *Jarchi* follows) he encamped near to the former.

Ver. 16. *And next to him was Amasiah the Son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty Men of Valour.]* Some think, he served as a Volunter, without any Stipend; or that he vowed himself to the Service. *Kimchi* thinks that he offered Gold and Silver to the Treasury, for the Service of the LORD.

Ver. 17. *And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty Man of Valour, and with him armed Men, with Bow and Shield, two hundred thousand.]* All the former were of Judah; now he mentions those of Benjamin, and the eminent Persons who commanded them.

Ver. 18. *And next him was Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand, ready prepared for the War.]* See v. 16. If we put all these Numbers of valiant Men together, they make a great Demonstration of the wonderful Blessings of God upon Jehoshaphat: Who, tho' he had little more than the third part of the Kingdom which David had, yet went much beyond him, in Proportion, in the Number of able Men that were subject to him. For David when he numbred the People, found but thirteen hundred thousand; and Jehoshaphat had several Bodies of good Troops, which all together amounted to eleven hundred and sixty thousand; not reckoning the Garisons, which were in the strong Holds. Nor is there any thing incredible in this, for we read the like in prophane Histories. The great Thebes, for Instance, (as *Tacitus* relates in his *Annales*, Lib. ii.) furnished seven hundred thousand Soldiers, of

its own Inhabitants alone. But it is farther observable, how God blessed the Reign of these two last Kings, *Asa* and *Jehoshaphat*; in that when *Abijah* the Father of *Asa* could scarce bring into the Field four hundred thousand Men, (xiii. 3.) his Grand-son was able to muster almost three times that Number.

Ver. 19. *These waited on the King,]* That is, these great Men, who had such numerous Forces at their Command, attended the King's Person always, wheresoever he went.

Besides those whom the King put in the fenced Cities, throughout all Judah.] He made Governors of all strong Places, who constantly attended their Duty there, and were under the Direction of the great Men before-mentioned; who did not only wait upon the King, but, as *Pellicanus* conjectures, presided over the whole Kingdom, and were ready upon any Occasion to send abroad the King's Orders, and take Care of the publick Concerns.

C H A P. XVIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW Jehoshaphat had Riches, and Honour in Abundance,] So he had before this Time, (xvii. 5.) but now they were more increased.

And joined Affinity with Ahab.] For his Son married *Athaliah* the Daughter of *Ahab*, 2 Kings viii. 18. and Chap. xxi. ver. 6. of this Book. His great Prosperity tempted him to this Affinity with an abominable Idolater; having some Conceit, perhaps, that he might again unite by this Marriage, the two Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*.

Ver. 2. *And after certain Years,]* After there had been Peace three Years between *Israel* and *Syria*, as it is explained, 1 Kings xxii. 1.

He went down to Ahab to Samaria.] The Affinity between them, was the Occasion, I suppose, of this Visit.

And Ahab killed Sheep and Oxen for him in abundance, and for the People that were with him,] He entertained both *Jehoshaphat* and all his Attendants, with great Splendor: Which is not mentioned in the Book of the Kings, tho' the Substance of this Chapter is the same with that above-mentioned; and is there explained.

And persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead.] He caressed him so at this Feast, and used such Arguments as prevailed with him to undertake this Expedition.

Ver. 3. *And Ahab King of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat King of Judah, Wilt thou go up with me to Ramoth-gilead?]* What he had consented unto in the midst of their Merriment, he seems now to resolve more deliberately. See 1 Kings xxii. 4.

And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my People as thy People, and will be with thee in the War.] The Prophet *Hanani* had given his Father a Caution against this, xvi. 7. and *Jehoshaphat* is reproved for it afterwards, c. xix. 2. xx. 37. The *Targum* expounds the last Words thus, *That which happens to thee, shall happen to me, in this War.*

Ver. 4. *And Jehoshaphat said unto the King of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the Word of the LORD to Day.*

Ver.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the King of Israel gathered together of Prophets four hundred Men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to Battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the King's Hand.*

Ver. 6. *But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a Prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?*] These three Verses are the same in Sense, and almost in Words, with those which I have explained in 1 Kings xxii. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 7. *And the King of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one Man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesieth good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah, the Son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the King say so.] See there v. 8.*

Ver. 8. *And the King of Israel called for one of his Officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the Son of Imla.]* He seems to have thought, that Micaiah would be backward to come, because he knew the King's Hatred to him; and therefore he bids the Officer (who was a Person of Quality) quicken him.

Ver. 9. *And the King of Israel, and Jehoshaphat King of Judah, sat either of them on his Throne, clothed in their Robes, and they sat in a void Place, at the entering in of the Gate of Samaria,] The very same we read there v. 10. And the Targum explains it thus; they sat in a Semicircle, as the Court of Judgment used to do, that they might see one another, and all the People stood before them.*

And all the Prophets prophesied before them.] All the false Prophets, as the Targum understands it, who pretended to the Gift of Prophecy, which the following Words shew to be the Meaning.

Ver. 10. *And Zedekiah the Son of Cheneanah, had made him Horns of Iron, and said, Thus saith the LORD, with these thou shalt push Syria, until they be consumed.*

Ver. 11. *And all the Prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the Hand of the King.*

Ver. 12. *And the Messenger that went to call Micaiah, spake to him, saying, Behold, the Words of the Prophets declare good to the King with one Assent: let thy Word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.*

Ver. 13. *And Micaiah said, as the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.] There is no Difference between these Verses, and those in 1 Kings xxii. 11, 12, 13, 14.*

Ver. 14. *And when he was come to the King, the King said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go up to Ramoth-gilead to Battle, or shall I forbear? and he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your Hand.*

Ver. 15. *And the King said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou say nothing but the Truth to me, in the Name of the LORD?*

Ver. 16. *Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the Mountains, as Sheep that have no Shepherd; and the LORD said, These have no Master; let them return therefore every Man to his House in Peace.*

Ver. 17. *(And the King of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee, that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?)*

Ver. 18. *Again he said, Therefore hear the Word of the LORD.]* Some think, he spake these Words to the By-standers: But this is confuted by 1 Kings xxii. 19. where the Words are, *hear thou therefore,* speaking again to the King.

In all that follows to the End of the Chapter, there is scarce any Difference between it, and what is recorded in the Book of the Kings, where I have explained it; and will not here transcribe what the Reader may find there.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Jehoshaphat King of Judah returned to his House in Peace to Jerusalem.]* I suppose, as soon as the Battle was over, he immediately went to Jerusalem; to return Thanks to God for his wonderful Preservation.

Ver. 2. *And Jehu the Son of Hanani the Seer,] See 1 Kings xvi. 1.*

Went out to meet him,] Before he came into the City: That being admonished by him, he might be the more affected with the Mercy of God towards him in his Deliverance.

And said to King Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the Ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?] As much as to say, This is contrary to common Reason, which taught the Gentiles to make no Friendship with such as were God's Enemies. So Callimachus in his Hymn to Ceres, v. 117, 118.

Δάμνητε, μὴ τήνους ἐμὴν φίλῳ, ὅς τοι ἀπεχθής
Ἔσαι, μὴδ' ὁμότοιχῳ, ἐμοὶ κακογείτονες ἐχθροί.

O Ceres, he shall be none of my Friend, who is hated by thee: Nor shall he live under my Roof: Such Neighbours are odious unto me. Where the illustrious Spanhemius hath observed many the like Sayings among the Heathens; and shews, how the ancient Greeks abhorred to lodge in the same House with a Murderer, or other grievous Criminals; with whom they would not eat, much less be with them in their sacred Assemblies; looking upon them as impure Creatures.

Therefore is Wrath upon thee from before the LORD.] Upon which Account God threatens to punish him: Which some think he did by raising such numerous Enemies to invade him, as we read of in the next Chapter. But most of all, by suffering all his Sons to be murdered by their elder Brother, c. xxi. 4. And his Grand-children by Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 27. c. x. 13, 14.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheless, there are good Things found in thee,] For the sake of which, he so far pardoned his Error, as not to punish him in his own Person, but in his Posterity.*

In that thou hast taken away the Groves out of the Land, and hast prepared thine Heart to seek God.] The chief Thing wherein he pleased God was by abolishing idolatrous Worship; which he had done rigorously, and served God with a sincere Heart.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem:] Being settled at Jerusalem after his Visit to Ahab and the War with Syria, he had Time to reflect upon his Escape out of the late Battle, and the Reproof of the Prophet: At which he was so far from*

from being angry (as his Father *Aſa* had been, c. xvi. 7.) that he laid it to Heart, and ſeriously reſolved upon a farther Reformation, in other Matters, as well as Religion.

And he went out again through the People,] He had ſent out his Officers before (c. xvii. 7.) who went out by his Authority, and acted in his Name, about this very Buſineſs; but now he went in Perſon, as then by his Orders.

From Beersheba to Mount Ephraim,] The former of theſe had always been the utmoſt Bound Southward of the Tribe of *Judah*: And the latter, ſince the Diviſion of the Kingdom, had been the Northern Bound, as before the Diviſion was *Dan*.

And brought them back unto the LORD God of their Fathers.] Since the laſt Reformation, it ſeems ſome had revolted to their former Idolatry, whom he now reduced; eſpecially thoſe Cities which his Father had taken in Mount *Ephraim* (c. xv. 8.) who being *Iſraelites*, might have been drawn in again to worſhip the Calves.

Ver. 5. *And he ſet Judges in the Land, throughout all the fenced Cities of Judah, City by City.]* That is, in every one of theſe Cities. Or, as *Bertram* thinks it ſhould be tranſlated, *for City and City*: That is, he placed Judges in the principal Cities, unto which all Cauſes were brought from the leſſer Cities and Villages. This was a Means both to have Juſtice done between Man and Man, and alſo to preſerve them in the Worſhip of God, when Judges were ready at Hand, to call thoſe to an Account, who went after other Gods.

Ver. 6. *And ſaid to the Judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for Man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the Judgment.]* He gave them this very ſolemn Admonition, when he ſettled them in their Places. Which the *Targum* thus tranſlates, *Ye do not judge before the Sons of Men, but before the WORD of the LORD*; and his glorious Preſence reſides among you in the Act of Judgment. Which is a moſt illuſtrious Teſtimony that the ancient *Jews* believed more Perſons than one in the Deity.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you, take heed and do it:]* That is, do as I command you, judge according to the Law: For ſuch as God is, ſuch you ought to be, ſince you are in his Place.

For there is no Iniquity with the LORD our God, nor Reſpect of Perſons, nor taking of Gifts.] He bids them remember that as the Nature of God is perfectly juſt, ſo he cannot be moved to do Iniquity by Reſpect to the greateſt, or Pity to the meaneſt, or by any Gift be bribed to do unjuſtly; whom they ought to imitate, being intruſted by him with his Authority.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, in Jeruſalem did Jehoſhaphat ſet of the Levites, and of the Priests, and of the Chief of the Fathers of Iſrael,]* Many were of Opinion, that as before he ſpeaks of the Courts conſiſting of XXIII Judges, which were ſettled in every conſiderable City of the Kingdom; ſo here he ſpeaks of the High Court of all, conſiſting of LXX, called by the *Jews* the *Great Sanhedrin* ſitting at *Jeruſalem*; whither Appeals were made in all Cauſes, that could not be determined below. But if this be true,

V O L. II.

Jehoſhaphat was the firſt that we can find who ſettled this excellent Conſtitution: Of which we can find no Footſteps in the Books of *Joſhua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, *Samuel*, or in the foregoing *Kings*, as I have diſcourſ'd at large upon *Deut.* xvi. 18. xvii. 9. See my Notes there. And there is little in the ſucceeding Times to perſuade us of it; for *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* ſet up no ſuch Judicature, as that the *Jews* call *Sanhedrin*; which ſeems to have been wiſely conſtituted, when they fell under the Government of the *Macedonian* Princes, from whoſe Language they borrowed the Name. Tho' *Jehoſhaphat* therefore ſettled Judges in *Jeruſalem*, yet the Number of them is not certain.

For the Judgment of the LORD, and for Controverſies,] Theſe Words are variously expounded, ſome underſtanding by the Judgment of the LORD, Cauſes about ſacred Matters, others pecuniary Matters; and by *Controverſies*, ſome underſtanding Civil Cauſes, others Criminal and Capital. It is ſufficient, I think, to ſay, they tried all Sorts of Cauſes.

When they returned to Jeruſalem.] That is, when *Jehoſhaphat*, and thoſe that attended him, returned from the other Cities, where they had appointed Judges (ver. 5.) he conſtituted this ſupreme Court in the chief City of his Kingdom. I ſay, ſupreme Court, for there were not two of them, one for Eccleſiaſtical, the other for Civil Cauſes, as ſome have imagined: But one Court judged both, as *Grotius* hath very well proved, from the very Account here given of this Matter. For *Jehoſhaphat* bids theſe Judges try *what Cauſe ſoever ſhould come to them*, ver. 10. and adds, *between Blood and Blood, between Law and Commandment, Statutes and Judgments*: Which ſhews there was no Kind of Buſineſs in Controverſy, which did not come before this one Court. Nor do thoſe Words, ver. 11. prove the contrary, as he ſhews in his Book, *De Imperio ſum. Poteſt. circa Sacra*, Cap. xi. Sect. 15.

Ver. 9. *And he charged them, ſaying, Thus ſhall ye do in the Fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect Heart.]* He gives them the ſame ſolemn Charge, which he had given the other Judges (ver. 7.) that having the Fear of God before their Eyes, they ſhould do righteous Judgment, and not ſuffer themſelves to be any way corrupted; for God would judge all over again.

It is a moſt memorable Saying of *Cicero*; That Judges being ſworn to do Juſtice, ſhould remember when they come to paſs Sentence, *Deum ſe habere teſtem, id eſt, ut ego arbitror, mentem ſuam, qua nihil homini dedit ipſe Deus divinius*: That he hath God a Witneſs of what he doth, even his own Conſcience, than which God himſelf hath given unto Man nothing more Divine, L. iii. *De Officiis*, Cap. 10. Where he hath left this excellent Inſtruction alſo, That a Man muſt lay aſide the Perſon of a Friend, when he puts on the Perſon of a Judge.

Ver. 10. *And what Cauſe ſoever ſhall come to you of your Brethren that dwell in their Cities,]* By way of Appeal from the other Cities, where the Judges were wont to refer Matters of great Difficulty to this ſupreme Court

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at *Jerusalem*, where the Judges were most learned.

Between Blood and Blood,] When the Question was, who was next of Kin to an Estate, and should succeed him that was deceased. So some understand the Word *Blood* to signify *Kindred*. But *Jarchi* understands it of a Question, whether a Murder was voluntary, or a Man was killed by Chance.

Between Law and Commandment, Statutes and Judgments,] Some take the Word *Law* to be a general Word, the *Species* of which follow. So that it is as much as to say, ye shall judge concerning all Manner of Laws: First of *Commandments*, such as have a natural Equity in them; then *Statutes*, or positive Laws belonging to Rites and Ceremonies; and *Judgments*, concerning those Precepts, which direct the Manner of Proceeding in Judgment.

Ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so Wrath come upon you, and upon your Brethren:] This seems to be a Command, that they should not only pronounce a righteous Sentence in every Cause that came before them, but that they should admonish him who was in the Wrong (and all other Persons in the like Case) to beware of injuring their Neighbours for the Time to come.

This do, and ye shall not trespass.] But worthily discharge their Office.

Ver. 11. *And behold, Amariah the Chief Priest]* See concerning him, what I have noted upon *1 Chron. vi. 9, 10, &c.*

Is over you in all Matters of the LORD; and Zebadiab the Son of Ishmael, the Ruler of the House of Judah, for all the King's Matters:] Many understand by *the Matters of the LORD*, all Things sacred; and by *the King's Matters*, all Civil and Political Causes. But *Grotius* hath judiciously observed (in his Book *De Imperio sum. Potest. circa Sacra*, Cap. xi. Sect. 15.) that it is most agreeable to the Scripture to understand by *the Things of God*, those which were defined by the Law of God, and were to be judged by that Law: And by *the King's Matters*, such as not being defined by the Divine Law, were left to the Judgment of the King. Of which Kind were all Deliberations about what was expedient or not expedient. And thus he observes, the most learned of the Jewish Interpreters explain these Words, in his Book *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. i. Cap. 3. Sect. 20. But which way soever we distinguish the *Things of God* and the *King's Things*, yet one and the same Court took Cognizance of them both: Only with this Difference, that the Court had different Presidents according to the Nature of the Causes. In Things pertaining to God, *Amarias* the High-Priest sat as the first Judge; in Things pertaining to the King, *Zebadiab* a principal Person about the King had the Chair, and was the Moderator. For, as the High-Priest was most conversant in the Law of God, and therefore fittest to direct in such Matters; so the chief Ruler about the King, was most exercised in Matters left undetermined by the Law, and so fittest to preside in such Consultations.

There are indeed very learned Men, who think these Words plainly prove two different

Courts; in one of which Ecclesiastical Matters were determined, in the other Civil; in the former of which *Amarias* presided; in the latter, *Zebadiab*. Thus *Corn. Bertram*, in his Book *De Republ. Judaica*, p. 137, 139. whom *Const. L' Empereur* defends in his *Annotations* on that Place, and endeavours to prove out of *Deuteronomy*, that God himself instituted an Ecclesiastical Senate, distinct from the Civil, p. 389. But this is not a fit Place to meddle further with that Controversy: I shall only say, that I think *Grotius* hath sufficiently confuted this Opinion in the Book and Chapter before-mentioned, *De Imperio*, &c. And in his *Annotations* also upon St. Matthew v. 22. (on those Words *ἐν ὄνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ἰσχυροῦ*) where he makes this Paraphrase, upon this Speech of *Jehoshaphat*. *Do not despond, as not able to discharge so weighty an Office, for want of such Learning and Knowledge as is necessary for such a Work: You have excellent Men to guide you with their Counsel. Such is the Prince of the Senate, Amarias the Priest, a Man skilled in Judgment; and if any thing fall out belonging rather to Civil Prudence than to the Knowledge of the Law, Sabadias the Ishmaelite is ready at Hand, who is a principal Person in such Kind of Deliberations. And besides (as it here follows) you have the Levites their Assessors, who are very well skilled in many Arts.*

Also the Levites shall be Officers before you.] Some of the Levites were Members of this great Court, who sat in Judgment, ver. 8. The rest, who were not Judges, were Ministers under them to see their Sentence executed. But it appears by this Place, that the Word *Shoterim* doth not here signify, as in others, meer Apparitors who summoned Men to the Court; or such Officers as executed the Sentence of the Court; but Persons of some Authority, who had Power to make Offenders sensible of the Justice of the Sentence, and convince them of their Error: Which was a great Encouragement to the Judges to undertake this Office, and to judge uprightly.

Deal courageously, and the LORD shall be with the good.] He bids them not be afraid of any Man: For God, who employed them, would stand by them and defend them, if they were good and upright Judges. The *Targum* hath it, *the WORD of the LORD will help you, who is good.*

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *It came to pass after this also, that the Children of Moab, and the Children of Ammon,]* These seem to have been the Principal in this Invasion; the other, here mentioned (in the next Verse, and in ver. 22.) to have been Auxiliaries. For such was the ancient Way of making War, and still is to this Day, to call in the Assistance of their Neighbours: As appears by the *Romans* more especially, whose Armies consisted of their own Legions, on whom they chiefly relied, and their Auxiliaries; who agreed neither in their Discipline, nor in their Language, nor in their Affection, as *Vegetius* observes in his Book *De Re Militari*, Lib. ii. Cap. 2. and therefore could not do such Service.

Service. For which Cause (as he observes in the Beginning of this *third* Book) they took Care their *Socii Militares* should never exceed the Number of their own Soldiers; which is a Rule laid down by *Livy* and *Tacitus*.

And with them other beside the Ammonites] It ought to be translated, *and with them the Meunims*: Who were a People in *Arabia*, near the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*. See my *Annotations* upon *Judges* x. 12. and in this Book, c. xxvi. 6, 7. and *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, Lib. ii. Cap. 22.

Came against Jehoshaphat to battle.] Made an Invasion upon his Country.

Ver. 2. *Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great Multitude against thee from beyond the Sea,*] That is the *Dead-Sea*, as it is called in Scripture.

On this side Syria,] The *Targum* translates it, *From the Western Part of Syria*; for the *Dead-Sea* was the Western Bounds of that Country. And it is likely the *Syrians* joined against him, to revenge the Assistance he gave to *Ahab*.

And behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi.] A Place where there was a great Forest of Palm-trees. It seems he had but slender Intelligence, for he heard not of their Motion, till they were upon the Borders of his Country.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoshaphat feared,*] Having been lately told by the Prophet (c. xix 2.) that God was very angry with him.

And set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a Fast throughout all Judah.] Fasting was generally joined with Prayer in Times of Distress: Unto which he publicly called the whole Nation, that they might obtain Help from God.

Ver. 4. *And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the Cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.*] The *Targum* translates it, *to ask Mercy of him, and to beg his Direction, and to hear his holy Word*. For some Part of the Law was read upon those solemn Days. *Vitringa* takes this to be an Argument, that there were no Synagogues in every City in those Days. For there would have been no need they should come out of their Cities, and all resort to *Jerusalem*, to fast and pray and hear the Law there; which might have been done at home in their Synagogues, as well as in the Temple; tho' not indeed in such a solemn Manner, as it was performed by such a vast Conflux of People, in one Place, to make their Supplications to God. *De Vet. Synag.* Pars ii. L. i. Cap. 9.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoshaphat stood in the Congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the House of the LORD*] For there was a Throne, the *Hebrew* Doctors tell us, in the Court of the *Israelites*, where their Kings prayed to God, or spake to the People, as there was Occasion. So *Jehoshaphat* did, and in following Times, *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*; after the Example of *Solomon*, who began this Custom, c. vi. 13.

Before the new Court.] The most Learned in these Matters, confess they do not know what is meant by the *new Court*. Some think it probable, that it was only some Enlargement that

Jehoshaphat had made of the Court of the People, to render it more capacious: But others are of Opinion, that it signifies the *Court of the Women*, which was now made distinct from the *Court of the Men*. See 1 *Chron.* xv. 3. Thus *Constantine L' Empereur* thinks that the Court of the Women was not built by *Solomon*, but added in after Times, *Annot. in Cod. Middoth*, Cap. ii. Sect. 5. Where he disputes, that according to the *Misnah*, this Court when it was made, did not surround the Court of *Israel*; but the Breadth of them was equal, according to the Delineation there.

Ver. 6. *And said, O LORD God of our Fathers, art thou not God in Heaven? and rulest not thou over all the Kingdoms of the Heathen? and in thine Hand is there not Power and Might, so that none is able to withstand thee?*] This is the most admirable Prayer, that we read any of their Kings made; expressing the greatest Confidence in God, and representing to him the Justice of their Cause. He begins with an Acknowledgment of God's supreme and irresistible Power, which extends itself every where over all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, who are every one of them subject to his Authority.

Ver. 7. *Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the Inhabitants of this Land before thy People Israel, and gavest it to the Seed of Abraham thy Friend for ever?*] Then he remembers the peculiar Relation the People of *Israel* had to him, and the Promise to *Abraham*, and the Deed of Gift which he made of this Country to him, and to his Posterity for ever, as a Reward of his Fidelity to him.

Ver. 8. *And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a Sanctuary therein for thy Name, saying,*] Next to that, he remembers, that they had been long possessed of this Country, wherein an House had been built for his Worship by *Solomon*: To whom God promised at the Consecration of it, that he would have Regard to the Prayers made in that Place; and in the sixth Chapter of this Book, and in 1 *Kings* viii. The *Targum* here again saith, this Sanctuary was built to the Name of thy WORD, as in the foregoing Verse God is said to have driven out the Inhabitants of this Land by his WORD.

Ver. 9. *If when Evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgment,*] Some translate it, *the Sword of Judgment*, that is, the punishing Sword. But if *Judgment* signify any particular Punishment, distinct from the *Sword*, it must be wild Beasts, or Captivity: For *Pestilence* and *Famine* are particularly mentioned in the following Words. The *Targum* translate it, *Slaughter of the Sword*, which was a fore Judgment.

We stand before this House, and in thy Presence (for thy Name is in this House) and cry unto thee in our Affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.] See 1 *Kings* viii. 38, 39.

Ver. 10. *And now behold, the Children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir,*] Some think this explains what is meant by *others beside the Ammonites* (as we translate ver. 1.) viz. *Edomites*. So the *Targum* in that Place, *With these the Edomites, who joined with the Ammonites*. But see there.

Whom thou wouldst not let Israel invade, when they came out of the Land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not.] He represents in the next Place the foul Ingratitude of their Enemies (added to their Injustice) in invading their Country, unto which they had an undoubted Title; when the *Israelites* did not do them the least Harm, as they went to take Possession of it, but took the Pains to march a long Way about to come at it, rather than give them any Disturbance in their Country.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy Possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.]* It is a most odious Thing not to make grateful Returns of Benefits received; but to return Evil for Good is the highest Wickedness; which in this Case was aggravated by this, that they made an Attempt not only upon the Rights of the *Israelites*, but of God himself; whose Land this was, which they held of him as their LORD.

Ver. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judge them?] He appeals to the Justice of God, the righteous Judge, who rights those that suffer wrong, especially when they have no Helper. To judge in this Place signifies to punish, as in Exod. vi. 6. Psalm ix. 16. where these Words, the LORD is known by the Judgment which he executeth, are thus interpreted by Drusius, the LORD is known by the just Punishment which he inflicts. In his Miscellanies, Cent. i. Cap. 18.*

For we have no Might against this great Company that cometh against us: neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee.] This is the last Argument he uses to obtain Help from God; the weak Condition wherein he and his People were, which made them the Objects of the Divine Pity; especially since they placed all their Confidence and Hope in him alone. But it may seem strange that he should say they had *no Might* against this Multitude, when he had so many hundred thousand Men at Command, as are mentioned, Chap. xvii. 14, 15, 16, &c. To which it may be replied, that perhaps this was such a sudden Invasion, that he had not Time to gather a considerable Body to oppose them: Or rather, he distrusted the greatest Army, and acknowledged them to be of no Force, if God was not with them; on whom he intirely relied, and not on the Number and Valour of his Soldiers, tho' both were very great.

Victorinus Strigelius hath such a devout Reflection upon this Prayer of *Jehoshaphat*, that it will not be unacceptable, I persuade myself, to the pious Reader, if I here transcribe it. *In this weak and declining Condition wherein the Church now is, when the Devil is very outrageous, because he knows his Time to be short, &c. let us say daily with Jehoshaphat, we know not what to do; but our Eyes are upon thee. Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory. Thou art our King and our Shepherd; we are thy People, and the Sheep of thy Pasture. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm: But thy Power will be perfected in our Weakness. Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to thy Name give the Glory; for thy Mercy, and for thy Truth's Sake. Do not remember our Iniquities, but save*

us for thy Mercy's Sake; for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our Salvation, for the Glory of thy Name: Deliver us and be merciful to our Sins, for thy Name's Sake. Save us, O LORD our God, that we may give Thanks unto thy holy Name, and triumph in thy Praise. Such Addresses to God (so he concludes) will illustrate this Prayer of *Jehoshaphat*, better than the largest Commentaries.

Ver. 13. *And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their Wives, and their Children.]* The more to move the Divine Compassion towards them.

Ver. 14. *Then upon Jehaziel, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Benaiah, the Son of Jeiel, the Son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the Sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the Congregation.]* He seems not to have been a Prophet before this Time; when a sudden Inspiration came upon him from God, to comfort this great Assembly with assured Hope of Deliverance, before they stirred from the Place where they had prayed.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou King Jehoshaphat, thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid, nor dismayed by Reason of this great Multitude, for the Battle is not yours, but God's.]* As it was God's Cause which they now asserted, so they might be assured he would maintain it, by overthrowing their Enemies.

Ver. 16. *To morrow go ye down against them:]* *Jerusalem*, where they now were, was situated on a high Hill, and therefore he saith they should go down against these Enemies; who are said in the next Words to come up.

Behold, they come up by the Cliff of Ziz, and ye shall find them at the End of the Brook (or Valley) before the Wilderness of Jeruel.] God was so very gracious to them, as, by this Prophet, not only to assure them of Victory, but to inform them of the very Time, and Place, and Manner of it: The Time was the very next Morning; the Place is mentioned in the latter End of this Verse, as the Time is in the Beginning; and the Manner, in the Conclusion of the foregoing Verse, that it should be by the Hand of God, and not by their own; who should be only Spectators of the Victory which God himself would give them: So it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 17. *Ye shall not need to fight in this Battle; set your selves, stand ye still, and see the Salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; To morrow go out against them,]* He repeats what he had said before (which he knew would be the greatest Comfort to them) that they should have no Conflict with their Enemies; but only stand still in their Place, and see the Hand of God overthrowing them all. In which there was a notable Accomplishment of *Solomon's* Prayer, which *Jehoshaphat* recited.

For the LORD will be with you.] The WORD of the LORD will be your Helper, as the Targum expounds it.

Ver. 18. *And Jehoshaphat bowed his Head, with his Face to the Ground: and all Judah and Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.]* The King gave most humble Thanks

to God, as did all the People with him, after his Example.

Ver. 19. *And the Levites, of the Children of the Kohathites, and of the Children of the Korhites,]* Who were then waiting in their Course at the Temple.

Stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud Voice on high.] They sung Praise to God before the Army went out, as if the Victory had been already obtained. And they raised their Voice as high as they could, to express their full Assurance of Success. This, I suppose, they did by the Order of *Jehoshaphat*.

Ver. 20. *And they rose up early in the Morning, and went forth into the Wilderness of Tekoa:]* That is, the Army, who were to stand and face the Enemy, went forth from *Jerusalem*.

And as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood, and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem,] It is likely he stood in the Gate of the City, thro' which they marched out, and spake these Words to the several Companies as they passed by him.

Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his Prophets, so shall ye prosper.] The Targum translates it, *Believe in the WORD of the LORD your God, believe his Law, and his Prophets, &c.* God having made them a gracious Promise, expected their Belief of it, and Dependance on it: Otherwise they had no Reason to hope for Victory.

Ver. 21. *And when he had consulted with the People,]* That is, with the Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who represented the rest; without whose Consent he was loth to do any Thing in a Time of common Danger.

He appointed Singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the Beauty of Holiness,] It may be translated, *should praise his most sacred Majesty;* tho' it is commonly thought he ordered them to praise the LORD, with the same State, Pomp, and Ornament, that they worshipped in the Temple; in the same Habit, in that Order, and Magnificence, wherein they appeared in the Holy Place.

As they went out before the Army,] This was an Argument of great Courage and Assurance, that they led on the Army; declaring to their Enemies, that God (whose Ministers they were) was coming against them.

And to say, praise the LORD, for his Mercy endureth for ever.] This was the usual Song, which they sung at the Temple, ver. 13.

Ver. 22. *And when they began to sing and to praise,]* Before they had marched many Steps.

The LORD set Ambushments against the Children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah, and they were smitten.] Or, *smote one another,* as it is in the Margin. The Targum translates it, *The WORD of the LORD set Ambushments, &c.* By which that Paraphrast understands, his Angelical Ministers which attended him; who smote some of them secretly, and the rest thinking it was done by their Neighbours, fell upon them as their Enemies. But the Meaning seems rather to be, that the Ambushments which they had laid against *Judah*, by a Confusion among them-

selves made by a Divine Hand, fell upon a Part of their own Army, mistaking them for their Enemies.

Ver. 23. *For the Children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the Inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an End of the Inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.]* They of Mount Seir were ordered to fall upon *Judah*, out of an Ambushment; but by some Mistake they fell upon the *Ammonites*, their own Confederates; and they and the *Moabites* fell upon them, till they had intirely destroyed those of Seir. And when that was done, they continued in such Confusion, that they fell one upon another, still imagining they were destroying the *Jews*, who came upon them very early in the Morning, as the Prophet had directed.

Ver. 24. *And when Judah came toward the Watch-Tower in the Wilderness, they looked unto the Multitude, and behold, they were dead Bodies fallen to the Earth, and none escaped.]* Instead of meeting with any Enemy to oppose them, they saw them all lye dead upon the Ground; for this Tower, it is probable, stood upon the Cliff of Ziz (mentioned v. 16.) from whence they could behold how their Army lay.

Ver. 25. *And when Jehoshaphat and his People came to take away the Spoil of them, they found among them in abundance, both Riches with the dead Bodies, and precious Jewels (which they stript off for themselves)]* As they found rich Garments upon their Bodies, so they found great Treasure among their Baggage (as we call it) and many precious Jewels; which they brought along with them, I suppose, that they might appear the more glorious, in the Triumph which they promised themselves over the *Jews*.

More than they could carry away: and they were three Days in gathering the Spoil, it was so much.] They could not carry all the Spoil at once, but spent three Days in collecting it, and disposing of it; for there was vast Provision, no doubt, which they had made for the Subsistence of such a Multitude; and a great many Beasts for the Carriages that brought it to them.

Ver. 26. *And on the fourth Day they assembled themselves in the Valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: and therefore the Name of the same Place was called, the Valley of Berachah, unto this Day.]* One cannot think, that they deferred to give God Thanks for so signal a Victory, till four Days after it; but then they did it in a more solemn Manner than they could at first; the whole Body of the People assembling together, to acknowledge God's Goodness to them: Which they did in such a remarkable Manner, that it gave to the Place ever after the Name of the *Valley of Blessing*.

Ver. 27. *Then they returned every Man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the Fore-front of them, to go to Jerusalem with Joy.]* This is a further Instance of their Thankfulness to God for their Victory, that they did not return every Man to his own Home, after this Over-

throw;

throw; but first went back to Jerusalem, to bless him again for hearing their Prayers, and making good his Promises.

For the LORD had made them to rejoice over their Enemies.] This they did with great Joy, wherewith God had filled their Hearts, by making them triumph over such powerful Enemies.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Jerusalem with Psalteries, and Harps, and Trumpets, unto the House of the LORD.]* To express by these the Greatness of their Joy, and proclaim their Thankfulness to God.

Ver. 29. *And the Fear of God was on all the Kingdoms of those Countries,]* On all the neighbouring Nations, who heard of this glorious Victory without fighting.

When they had heard that the LORD fought against the Enemies of Israel.] Here the Targum hath it, *When they heard that the WORD of the LORD fought, &c.*

Ver. 30. *So the Realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his God gave him Rest round about.]* Here again the Targum saith, *The WORD of his God gave him Rest.*

Ver. 31. *And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five Years in Jerusalem: and his Mother's Name was Azubab the Daughter of Shilhi.]* See 1 Kings xxii. 42. It is likely, his Mother was a very religious Woman, who had taken Care to bring up Jehoshaphat in the Fear of the LORD; and happy had it been for him and his Family, if he had taken Care to marry his Son to such another Woman.

Ver. 32. *And he walked in the Way of Asa his Father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the Sight of the LORD.]* Whatsoever other Faults he had, he kept close to the Worship of God alone, and did many other good Things as the Law of Moses directed.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, the high Places were not taken away;]* This shews, that the Meaning of those Words, xvii. 6. is, that the high Places wherein God was worshipped, were not taken away; though those wherein Idols were served, were destroyed.

For as yet the People had not prepared their Hearts unto the God of their Fathers.] The Reason of it is here given, the People could not bear it; for their Hearts were not disposed to serve God exactly according to the Law of Moses; but though they renounced Idolatry, and worshipped none but the LORD, yet they would not have his Worship, by Sacrifices, restrained to one Place alone, but have the Liberty to sacrifice elsewhere.

Ver. 34. *Now the rest of the Acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the Book of Jehu the Son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the Book of the Kings of Israel.]* He was an eminent Prophet in the Time of Baasha King of Israel, and lived to the End of Jehoshaphat's Reign. See 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7. He, as several other Prophets, wrote the History of his own Time, out of which Monuments these Books were collected; and his Work was so highly esteemed, that it was registred in the Book of the Kings of Israel; which were Com-

mentaries, as Huetius thinks, of what daily passed. *Demonstr. Evang.* p. 202.

Ver. 35. *And after this]* That is, after the LORD had given him such a glorious Victory, and struck Terror into all his Enemies, and given him Rest and Quiet round about.

Did Jehoshaphat King of Judah join himself with Abaziah King of Israel, who did very wickedly.] This was a great Weakness, to make Friendship with the Son, when he had been so sharply reprov'd for joining with his Father Ahab, (c. xix. 2.) especially since he was no better, but a very wicked Idolater; and tho' he did not join with him in making War, but only in Trade, yet God took it ill of him, and threatned to punish him for it, ver. 37. Into this he was betrayed by the Affinity which was between them, which shews how dangerous it is to marry with Idolaters.

Ver. 36. *And he joined himself with him to make Ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the Ships in Ezion-gaber.]* They were Ships of Tarshish made to go to Ophir; as we learn from 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49. where I have shewn, how this Place and that agree. Bochart thinks there was a Place called Tarshish in the Indian Ocean near to Ophir (that is Taprobana) which the Phœnicians called by the same Name with the other Tarshish, because the same Commodities come from both. See his Phaleg, Lib. iii. Cap. 7.

Ver. 37. *Then Eliezer the Son of Dodavab of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Abaziah, the LORD hath broken thy Works.]* In the Targum it is again, *The WORD of the LORD hath destroyed thy Works.* Which he laid to Heart so much, that when Abaziah afterwards desired to join in some Voyage with him, he would not consent; as we read in 1 Kings xxii. 29.

And the Ships were broken that they were not able to go to Tarshish.] They were shatter'd in the very Place where they were built, in Ezion-gaber. See 1 Kings xxii. 48.

C H A P. XXI.

Ver. 1. **N**OW Jehoshaphat slept with his Fathers, and was buried with his Fathers in the City of David: and Jehoram his Son reigned in his stead.] By his own Appointment, as appears from v. 3. He was designed King in the seventeenth Year of the Reign of Jehoshaphat, and crowned in the twenty third Year, and afterward reigned eight Years; three with his Father, and five alone. See v. 5.

Ver. 2. *And he had Brethren, the Sons of Jehoshaphat,]* They had the same Father, if not the same Mother; which made his Wickedness in killing them the more unnatural.

Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah:] The fourth Son is distinguished in the Hebrew from the first, by the Addition of *hu*, the first being called Azariah, this Azariabhu.

All these were the Sons of Jehoshaphat King of Israel.] He was King of Israel in a large Sense, many of Israel being subject to him. So Abaz is also called, xxviii. 19. where I shall give some further Account of it.

Ver.

Ver. 3. *And their Father gave them great Gifts of Silver and Gold,]* After the Manner of the ancient Patriarchs. See Gen. xxv. 6.

And of precious Things,] The Hebrew Word signifies any thing that is excellent in its Kind; whether Jewels or Garments, or Fruits of the Earth, as Beckius observes out of Solomon Abu Melech.

With fenced Cities in Judah:] Over which he made them Governors. This he did very prudently, for providing so well for them, that they might not be tempted to envy the Kingdom to their Brother; nor quarrel among themselves. But as Strigelius observes out of Cicero, *Sæpe optima cogitata pessime cadunt*: Things excellently designed, have often very ill Event. For these Riches of theirs made their Brother first fear them; and then, being wickedly covetous, he was tempted to make them away, that he might get what they had into his Possession.

But the Kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the first-born.] He could not but know his wicked Disposition, by his Inclination to Idolatry; but was swayed purely by his being the First-born, to settle the Kingdom upon him, tho' not so deserving as his Brethren. For such was the Power of the Kings of Judah, (as Conringius observes) that they took upon them to dispose of the Kingdom, as if it had been their Patrimony. Some think, he superstitiously observed that Law, Deut. xxi. 13. for sometime the younger Sons were preferred to the elder, as we find in the Sons of Josiah, 2 Kings xxxi. 36. But (as Mr. Selden shews) common Usage was otherwise, Lib. ii. De Successione ad Pontif. Cap. 1. p. 202. where he translates these Words, *Regnum autem transmisit, &c.* not he gave, but he transmitted the Kingdom to Jehoram,

Ver. 4. *Now when Jehoram was risen up to the Kingdom of his Father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his Brethren with the Sword,]* Being advanced to the Throne, his first Business was, to make himself so strong, that he might be able without Danger to murder all his Brethren. Which he did; that neither they nor their Posterity might ever pretend to the Crown. Perhaps they were inclined to the true Religion, and therefore he made them away; lest they should oppose him, when he went about to alter it, and bring in the old Idolatry.

And divers also of the Princes of Israel.] Several of the most eminent Persons in the Country, such as the Judges, established by Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem, and in the Country; lest they should revenge the Death of his Brethren. See Grotius.

Ver. 5. *Jehoram was thirty and two Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight Years in Jerusalem.*

Ver. 6. *And he walked in the Way of the Kings of Israel, like as did the House of Ahab: for he had the Daughter of Ahab to Wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the Eyes of the LORD.]* These two Verses are the very same with 1 Kings viii. 17, 18. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the House of David, because of the Covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a Light to him, and to his Sons for ever.*

Ver. 8. *In his Days the Edomites revolted from under the Dominion of Judah, and made themselves a King.*

Ver. 9. *Then Jehoram went forth with his Princes, and all his Chariots with him, and he rose up by Night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the Captains of the Chariots.*

Ver. 10. *So the Edomites revolted from under the Hand of Judah unto this Day. The same time also did Libnah revolt from under his Hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his Fathers.]* There is little Difference between these four Verses, and what we read in 2 Kings viii. 19, 20, 21, 22. I shall only note here, that this was the first Punishment God inflicted on him, for his Sin, in not following his good Father, but turning unto Idols.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, he made high Places in the Mountains of Judah,]* For the Worship of strange Gods.

And caused the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit Fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.] He not only gave them a bad Example, and enticed them to Idolatry: But by Threatnings and Compulsions he endeavoured to constrain them to conform to his Example.

Ver. 12. *And there came a Writing from Elijah the Prophet,]* It is certain Elijah was taken up into Heaven in the Time of Jehoshaphat: Therefore Josephus and the LXX imagine, (as Grotius observes) that from thence he sent a Letter: Which is no more wonderful, than that Judas Maccabæus should see in a Divine Dream Onias and Jeremiah praying for the People, (2 Maccab. xv.) so that the Meaning may be, that Elisba saw Elijah appear to him, and bid him write these Words, and send them to Jehoram. But our Dr. Lightfoot is of Opinion, that it is not meant of that Elijah, who was carried up to Heaven, but of another of his Name, who sent this Letter. His Reason is, because he is always called *Elijah the Tishbite*, and never *Elijah the Prophet*. See him upon Luke i. 17. But in this, I think, he is singular; and it is not true, that he is always called the *Tishbite*: but sometimes simply *Elijah*; and in 1 Kings xix. 16. God calls him *Prophet*. Therefore Kimchi seems to me to have given the most natural and plainest Sense of these Words, in his Commentary on this Place: That *Elijah* foreseeing, by the Spirit of Prophecy, before he went to Heaven, the Wickedness of Jehoram, spake these Words to one of the Prophets, and charged him to put them down in Writing, and send them in a Letter to Jehoram, when he grew so impious as is here related; and let him know, that *Elijah* commanded this Writing to be delivered to him: That so Jehoram being affected with it, as if it had been sent from Heaven, might be moved to repent of the Evil he had done. And indeed this Passage will bear this Sense, if we take the Words, *from Elijah*, not to relate to the first Words, *there came*; but to the immediately precedent, *a Writing*. He did not send a Writing, but it was sent as his Writing. For there is nothing in the Words to intimate that this was written after his Death, but delivered after his Death: So that it might have been written (for any thing that appears to

to the contrary) by *Elijah* himself, before he was taken up into Heaven.

Saying, *Thus saith the LORD God of thy Father David,*] He seems to upbraid him with his Degeneracy from so pious an Ancestor, as *David* was from whom he descended.

Because thou hast not walked in the Ways of Jehoshaphat thy Father, nor in the Ways of Asa King of Judah.] His Sin was the greater, because both his Father and his Grand-Father had left him an excellent Example.

Ver. 13. *But hast walked in the Ways of the Kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a Whoring, like the Whoredoms of the House of Abab,*] He was not only an Idolater himself, nor only by his Example corrupted others, but used his Authority to draw, or rather to force them into idolatrous Worship; and that of the very worst Sort.

And also hast slain thy Brethren of thy Father's House, which were better than thyself.] This seems to signify that they were pious Persons, who abhorred Idolatry: And therefore his Sin was the more heinous in cutting them off, proceeding from Enmity to God, as well as to them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, with a great Plague will the LORD smite thy People, and thy Children, and thy Wives, and all thy Goods.*] There was no Calamity that could be thought of (as *Vit. Strigelius* observes) which did not befall this wicked Prince, whose Kingdom was destroyed and depopulated by the fiercest Nations; his Treasures ranfack'd; his Wives carried into Captivity; his Children slain; and he himself laboured under a sore Disease for two Years; and when he was dead had not the Honour of Royal Sepulture, such as his Ancestors had. All which Calamities were threatned in the Writing sent him in the Name of *Elijah*; that he might not think they came by Chance, but by the special Direction of Almighty God, as a Punishment for his Wickedness. But why should his People suffer, who are threatned in the first Place to be plagued? The Reason was, because their base Fear made them comply with him in his Idolatry: And besides, he was punished by the Loss of them.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt have great Sickness by Disease of thy Bowels,*] A Dysentery miserably tormented him.

Till thy Bowels fall out,] For what should he do with Bowels, who had no Pity and Compassion on his own Brethren?

By Reason of the Sickness Day by Day.] For two Years, as it is interpreted ver. 19. For Days sometimes signifies a Year: And in the Hebrew the Words are, *Days upon Days*, that is, one Year after another.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the Spirit of the Philistines,*] Who invaded him on the West-side of his Kingdom, as the *Arabians* did on the East-side: Who stood in such Awe of his Father, that they brought him Presents, c. xvii. 11.

And the Arabians that were near to the Ethiopians.] It should be translated, *that were near to the Cushites*, a People inhabiting the inmost

Parts of *Arabia*, not far from *Nabathæa* and *Negid*, which was then called *Cush*, in the Confines of the Territories of *Babylon*, which was the ancient *Cush*: By which Name *Arabia*, or some Part of it is to be understood in many Places. See xiv. 9. and 2 *Kings* xix. 9. Whence the *Topaz of Cush* must be understood of the *Topaz of Arabia*, not of *Ethiopia*: In which Country there are no precious Stones, as *Ludolphus* was assured by a Priest of *Ethiopia*, and is confirmed by our Merchants. See Dr. *Hyde* in his late Book *De Relig. Veterum Persarum*, Cap. i. p. 37. and my *Annotations* on the Place above-mentioned.

The Hebrew Phrase *aljad*, (*at hand*) is well translated *near* by us, for so it signifies plainly in other Places. And *Forsterus* perhaps hath rightly observed, that the Bounds and Limits of Countries were called *jad* (i. e. *a Hand*) because a Hand was there placed, to denote that there was the End of the Territory, which reached no farther.

Ver. 17. *And they came up into Judah, and brake into it,*] For his Soldiers were not able to defend it from this Irruption on both Sides.

And carried away all the Substance that was found in the King's House, and his Sons also,] Whom they slew, c. xxii. 1.

And his Wives;] All except *Athaliah*, who hid herself, it is likely, in some secret Place, with her youngest Son.

So that there was never a Son left him, save Jehoabaz the youngest of his Sons.] Who is also called *Abaziah*, c. xxii. 1. and by the Interposition of one Letter *Azariah*, ver. 6.

Ver. 18. *And after all this, the LORD smote him in his Bowels with an incurable Disease.*] He lived to see all these Calamities, which the Prophet threatned, come upon him: And then the WORD of the LORD, saith the *Targum*, smote him with a Disease, for which there was no Remedy.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass in Process of Time, after the End of two Years, his Bowels fell out by Reason of his Sickness: so he died of sore Diseases.*] The last Words seem to import, that there was a Complication of other Diseases, together with his Dysentery: All which were very grievous, and a suitable Punishment to his horrid Wickedness.

And his People made no burning for him, like the burning for his Fathers.] See upon c. xvi. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thirty and two Years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight Years, and departed without being desired.*] Some think the Meaning is, he was weary of his Life, being so full of Pain, as to desire to die, rather than live in such Misery. But the most natural Sense is, that his People did not wish he should live any longer, but were glad his Reign was so short: As appeared by their Contempt of him, in making no Burning for him, nor burying him in the Sepulchre of the Kings, as it here follows.

Howbeit they buried him in the City of David, but not in the Sepulchre of the Kings.] They shewed some Respect to him, but not such as expressed any Esteem of him.

C H A P. XXII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Inhabitants of Jerusalem made Abaziah his youngest Son, King in his Stead:] They declared him King, and set him on his Father's Throne: But the Kingdom was his of Right, without the Suffrage of the People.

For the Band of Men that came with the Arabians to the Camp,] Mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 16.

Had slain all the Eldest. So Abaziah the Son of Jehoram King of Judah reigned.] This Band of Men came up with the Arabians, but, it seems, acted by themselves; and killed those in cold Blood, whom the Arabians had carried Captive, c. xxi. 17.

Ver. 2. *Forty and two Years old was Abaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one Year in Jerusalem:]* Many ways there are to reconcile this with 2 Kings viii. 26. where it is said he was two and twenty Years old when he began to reign. See my *Annotations* on that Place. The shortest and plainest Way is to acknowledge an Error in the Copyist or Transcriber. For some Greek Copies have here XXII Years old; and so it is in the Syriack and Arabick Translations. And our great Primate *Usher* found it so, in a Copy which he procured, at great Charge, from that of the Patriarch of Antioch. *Piscator* also acknowledges, there is no other way, that he knew, to solve this Doubt.

His Mother's Name also was Athaliah the Daughter of Omri.] His Grand-Daughter, for she was Abab's Daughter, c. xxi. 6. and see 2 Kings viii. 26.

Ver. 3. *He also walked in the Ways of the House of Abab: for his Mother was his Counsellor to do wickedly.]* She had the greater Power of him, because she had saved him together with herself, when the other Wives and Children of Jehoram were carried away Captive. And she is said to have advised him to do wickedly, because she led him into a worse Idolatry than that of Jeroboam's: Which is called *the Way of the House of Abab*; not because they were the first Inventors of it, but the chief Establishers of it in these Parts. It did not consist merely in the Worship of God by an Image, which was the Way of Jeroboam, but in the Worship of other Gods beside the God of Israel, viz. Baal-gods, or Baalim: Supposing either by these to have easier Access to the Sovereign God, the LORD of Hosts; or that these they might resort unto at all Times, and for all Matters, as being nearer at Hand, and not of so high a Dignity; whereas Jehovab the God of Israel, most High, either managed not smaller Matters, or might not be troubled with them. For such was the Conceit of the Heathen, that the Souls of great Men after Death, had the Honour to be Agents between the supreme God and Men, as being of a middle Nature between them; which the Greeks called *Dæmons*, and the Scriptures call *Baalim*. See Mr. Mede, Book i. *Discourse* xliii. 243.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore he did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, like the House of Abab: for they were his Counsellors after the Death of his Father,*

to his Destruction.] His Father was so bad, that there was no need any other should endeavour to seduce him, while he lived: But when he was dead, his Mother's Kindred thought it necessary to confirm him in his Idolatry.

Ver. 5. *He walked also after their Counsel,]* In other Matters as well as Religion.

And went with Jehoram the Son of Ahab King of Israel, to war against Hazael King of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians smote Foram.] Tho' he would not imitate his Grand-Father in that which was good in him, yet he followed his bad Example; in joining with Abab's Son, as Jehoshaphat had with Abab, in the like War.

Ver. 6. *And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, because of the Wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael King of Syria. And Azariah the Son of Jehoram King of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the Son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.]* These two Verses have been explained in 2 Kings viii. 28, 29.

Ver. 7. *And the Destruction of Abaziah was of God by coming to Foram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jechu the Son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the House of Abab.]* See how this was done in 2 Kings ix. 21, 27. and what I have noted there.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass that when Jechu was executing Judgment upon the House of Abab, and found the Princes of Judah, and the Sons of the Brethren of Abaziah, that ministred to Abaziah, he slew them.]* As they were going to Samaria. See 2 Kings x. 13, 14.

Ver. 9. *And he sought Abaziah: and they caught him (for he was hid in Samaria) and brought him to Jechu: and when they had slain him, they buried him, because (said they) he is the Son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his Heart. So the House of Abaziah had no Power to keep still the Kingdom.]* The Story of his Death is related here a little more particularly than in the Book of the Kings. See what I have noted there concerning the whole, 2 Kings ix. 27, 28.

Ver. 10. *But when Athaliah the Mother of Abaziah saw that her Son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the Seed Royal of the House of Judah.]* See 2 Kings xi. 1.

Ver. 11. *But Jehoshabeath the Daughter of the King,]* i. e. Of the former King, Jehoram.

Took Joash the Son of Abaziah, and stole him from among the King's Sons that were slain, and put him and his Nurse in a Bed-chamber.] See concerning this my *Annotations* upon 2 Kings xi. 2.

So Jehoshabeath the Daughter of King Jehoram, the Wife of Jehoiada the Priest (for she was the Sister of Abaziah) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.] She was the Sister of Abaziah by the Father's Side, tho' not by the Mother's: For Jehoram had many Wives, as we read in the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 12. *And he was with them hid in the House of God six Years, and Athaliah reigned over the Land.]* See in the Place above-named what I have noted about the Place wherein he was hid in the House of God; which the Targum here fancies was in the very Holy of Holies: In-

to which none but the High-Priest might enter, and that but once a Year. But if this should pass for Truth, we must not understand it of the most holy Place itself, but of some Chamber over it, as *Beckius* there observes, which will not justify this Exposition; for, as I have observed before, there was no Entrance into the Room over it; nor is there any ground to think there was any Building over it.

C H A P. XXIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND in the seventh Year *Jehoiada* strengthened himself, and took the Captains of Hundreds, *Azariah* the Son of *Jerobam*, and *Ishmael* the Son of *Jehobanan*, and *Azariah* the Son of *Obed*, and *Maaseiah* the Son of *Adaiah*, and *Elishaphat* the Son of *Zichri*, into Covenant with him.] It is not to be supposed that he took all the Captains of Hundreds that were in the Nation, into Confederacy with him; but such whom he could depend upon, whose Names are here mentioned.

Ver. 2. And they went about in *Judah*, and gathered the Levites out of all the Cities of *Judah*,] These Captains went about, and communicated the Design to the Levites, as Men that might be trusted with it.

And the Chief of the Fathers of *Israel*,] Some of which were under the Government of the King of *Judah*; and others, perhaps, were known to be well affected to Religion, and so were invited to give their Assistance. But it is most likely that *Judah* is here called *Israel* (as in several other Places) the principal Men of Authority of which were acquainted with *Jehoiada's* Intentions.

And they came to *Jerusalem*.] To settle their Resolution with *Jehoiada*.

Ver. 3. And all the Congregation made a Covenant with the King in the House of God: and he said unto them, Behold, the King's Son shall reign, as the LORD hath said of the Sons of *David*.] When all the fore-named Persons were assembled at the Temple, the young King was produced, and they all swore to be faithful to him. See 2 Kings xi. 4. Where, in the following Verses, most of this Chapter hath been explained already.

Ver. 4. This is the Thing that ye shall do; A third Part of you entering on the Sabbath of the Priests and of the Levites, shall be Porters of the Doors;

Ver. 5. And a third Part shall be at the King's House; and a third Part at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the People shall be in the Courts of the House of the LORD.] See 2 Kings xi. 5, 6, 7. where this is delivered a little more largely.

Ver. 6. But let none come into the House of the LORD, save the Priests, and they that minister of the Levites,] Who were then in waiting in their Courfe.

They shall go in, for they are holy:] They were consecrated to the Service of God, and were bound to attend there.

But all the People shall keep the Watch of the LORD.] That is, of the House of the LORD, as was said before, ver. 5.

Ver. 7. And the Levites shall compass the King round about, every Man with his Weapons in his

Hand, and whosoever else cometh into the House, he shall be put to death: but be you with the King when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.] It appears by 2 Kings xi. 8. that Part of the Levites were assigned to be the King's Guard; which did not belong to their Office (which was to guard the Temple, and minister there) but upon this extraordinary Occasion they were thus employed, as Men upon whose Fidelity *Jehoiada* might rely.

Ver. 8. So the Levites and all *Judah* did according to all things that *Jehoiada* the Priest had commanded, and took every Man his Men that were to come in on the Sabbath, with them that were to go out on the Sabbath: for *Jehoiada* the Priest dismissed not the Courses.] This is more distinctly set down in 2 Kings xi. 7. to which I refer the Reader.

Ver. 9. Moreover, *Jehoiada* the Priest delivered to the Captains of Hundreds, Spears, and Bucklers, and Shields, that had been King *David's*, which were in the House of God.] These seem to have been hung up as Trophies in the House of God, after *David's* Victories. See there, ver. 10.

Ver. 10. And he set all the People (every Man having his Weapon in his Hand) from the right Side of the Temple, to the left Side of the Temple, along by the Altar and the Temple, by the King round about.] See there, ver. 11.

Ver. 11. Then they brought out the King's Son, and put upon him the Crown, and gave him the Testimony, and made him King: and *Jehoiada* and his Sons anointed him,] The same is said 2 Kings xi. 12. only one thing is here added, that he was anointed by *Jehoiada* and his Sons; among whom *Zacharias* was one, whom the King most basely requited. The Targum here hath a long Fable, that this was the Crown taken from the Head of the King of *Ammon*, wherein was a Magnet, &c.

And said, God save the King.] They said this, with clapping their Hands, as we read in the Book of the Kings.

Ver. 12. Now when *Athaliah* heard the Noise of the People, running and praising the King, she came to the People into the House of the LORD.] They ran from Place to Place proclaiming the King, and praising God, for setting him upon the Throne. This is more briefly related in 2 Kings xi. 13.

Ver. 13. And she looked, and behold, the King stood at his Pillar, at the entering in, and the Princes, and the Trumpets by the King: and all the People of the Land rejoiced, and sounded with Trumpets, also the Singers with Instruments of Musick, and such as taught to sing praise. Then *Athaliah* rent her Clothes, and said, Treason, Treason.] In this Verse something is added concerning their Expressions of Joy, with Instruments of Musick, &c. otherwise it is the same with 2 Kings xi. 14.

Ver. 14. Then *Jehoiada* the Priest brought out the Captains of Hundreds that were set over the Host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the Ranges: and who so followeth her, let him be slain with the Sword. For the Priest said, Slay her not in the House of the LORD.] See 2 Kings xi. 15. where this is expressed more plainly.

Ver. 15. So they laid Hands on her; and when she was come to the entering of the Horse-gate, by the King's House, they slew her there.] See 2 Kings

2 Kings xi. 16. For no doubt an Usurper may be slain, by those who have the supreme Power and Authority; whether it be in the King, or the Senate, or the People, as *Grotius* speaks. To which he adds the Tutors of young Kings who are their Pupils, such as *Jehoiada*, L. i. *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. iv. Sect. 8. where he very wisely subjoins, that he cannot allow any private Man to have a Right to kill an Usurper, Sect. 19. Such a one *Athaliah* was, for she had no Right to reign, but invaded the Throne, by a tyrannical Force, as *Schickard* calls it, Cap. i. Theorem iii. *De Jure Regio*.

Ver. 16. *And Jehoiada made a Covenant between him, and between all the People, and between the King, that they should be the LORD's People.*] I have explain'd this in 2 Kings xi. 17. where it is expressly said this Covenant was made between the LORD, and the People and the King. See there. Unto which I may here add, that there is no such Difference between these two Verses, as may be imagined. For *Jehoiada* the Priest sustaining the Person of God, the Covenant was made with God, not with *Jehoiada*, who only represented God, to whom they promised Obedience.

Ver. 17. *Then all the People went to the House of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his Altars, and his Images in Pieces, and slew Mattan the Priest of Baal before the Altars.*] See 2 Kings xi. 18.

Ver. 18. *Also Jehoiada appointed the Offices of the House of the LORD by the Hand of the Priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the House of the LORD, to offer the Burnt-offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the Law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.*] What is set down briefly, at the End of that 18th Verse, that the Priest appointed Officers over the House of the LORD, is here set down more largely in this Verse, and in the next. The first Words of which sound thus in the Hebrew, *he put the Offices, the Offices of the House of the LORD, in the Hand of the Priests and Levites*: Who perhaps had been put out of their Offices, by the former wicked Kings, or by *Athaliah*, and now were restored by *Jehoiada*, according to the Regulation made by *David*.

Ver. 19. *And he set the Porters at the Gates of the House of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in.*] These also had been constituted by *David*. See 1 Chron. xxvi. 1, &c. For there is no earthly King, as *Maimonides* observes, whose Palace is not incompassed with strong Guards: And therefore much more fit was it that the Dwelling-Place of God, the King of Kings, should be surrounded by his Ministers, Priests and Levites, who should carefully watch that nothing did pollute it.

Ver. 20. *And he took the Captains of Hundreds, and the Nobles, and the Governors of the People, and all the People of the Land, and brought down the King from the House of the LORD: and they came thro' the high Gate into the King's House, and set the King upon the Throne of the Kingdom.*] He would have those who had begun this Work, see it accomplished: And therefore they all accompanied the King from the Temple to his

Palace, and saw him set on the Throne of his Father (see 2 Kings xi. 19.) whereby he took Possession of the Kingdom, to which he had been anointed in the Temple.

Ver. 21. *And all the People of the Land rejoiced: and the City was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the Sword.*] See this explained in 2 Kings xi. 20.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. **J**oash was seven Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty Years in Jerusalem: his Mother's Name also was Zibeah of Beersheba.

Ver. 2. *And Joash did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, all the Days of Jehoiada the Priest.*] These two Verses are the same with those 2 Kings xii. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoiada took for him two Wives, and he begat Sons and Daughters.*] He did not take these two Wives for the King, but for himself: Which was contrary to the constant Tradition of the Jews, that the High-Priest was to be so pure, as to have but one Wife at a Time: Which they endeavour to prove by Scripture, from *Levit. xxi. 13, 14*. The *Gemara Babylonica* reports this, and *Maimonides* asserts it (see *Braunius* in his *Selesta Sacra*, L. iii. Cap. 2.) Therefore *Jehoiada* is supposed to have had two Wives before he was High-Priest; or rather, one being dead, he took another. Or, as the *Talmudists* will have it, after he had divorced one he married another, as *Mr. Selden* observes, L. iii. *Uxor Hebr.* Cap. 19. But after all, it is not certain that *Jehoiada* was High-Priest, for he is every where called *Jehoiada the Priest*; and but once only ver. 6. *the Chief*: Which doth not necessarily imply that he was the High-Priest, but only a great Man, because of his Relation to the Royal Family; or because he was the chief Head of one of the XXIV Families of the Priests. But he seems to be distinguished from the High-Priests in 2 Kings xii. 9, 10. and is not mentioned either in *Ezra vii.* or 1 *Chron. vi.*

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the House of the LORD.*] As is related something more particularly in 2 Kings xii. 4, &c.

Ver. 5. *And he gathered together the Priests and the Levites, and said unto them, Go out unto the Cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel Money to repair the House of your God from Year to Year,*] That something might be done every Year, till the Temple was put into good Repair. What Money this was that they were to collect, we are informed 2 Kings xii. 4.

And see that ye haste the Matter: howbeit the Levites hastened it not.] Things were in so bad a Condition, that it required the Work should be begun with Speed: Yet such was the Negligence of the Levites, and the Backwardness perhaps of the People to part with their Money, that in the twenty third of this King's Reign, nothing was done; as we are informed in 2 Kings xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the King called for Jehoiada the Chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required*

required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, the Collection, according to the Commandment of Moses the Servant of the Lord, and of the Congregation of Israel, for the Tabernacle of Witness?] Such Oblations as were freely made in Moses his Time for the building of the Tabernacle. See *Exod.* xxxv. 5. There was also, beside this voluntary Oblation, a Tax set upon them. See *Exod.* xxx. 12, 13. It is called the *Tabernacle of Witness*, because here were kept the *two Tables* in the Ark, which witnessed the Covenant between God and them. See upon *Exod.* xxv. 16.

Ver. 7. *For the Sons of Athaliah, that wicked Woman, had broken up the House of God,]* That is, *Abaziah*, and the Sons of his Brethren mentioned *c.* xxii. 8. For his Brethren themselves were carried Captive before their Father died, *c.* xxi. 17. Or, as *Abarbinel* expounds it, she being a *wicked Woman*, played the Whore with another Man, by whom she had several Bastards, who committed this Impiety. Therefore they are called the *Sons of Athaliah*, their Father being unknown.

And also all the dedicate Things of the House of the LORD] Which should have been employed in the Reparation of it.

Did they bestow upon Baalim.] Gave them either to adorn the Temples of those false Gods, or to promote their Worship.

Ver. 8. *And at the King's Commandment they made a Chest, and set it without, at the Gate of the House of the LORD.]* This is more largely related in *2 Kings* xii. 9. See there.

Ver. 9. *And they made a Proclamation thro' Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the Collection that Moses the Servant of God laid upon Israel in the Wilderneys.]* One like to that, according as every Man should freely offer.

Ver. 10. *And all the Princes, and all the People rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the Chest,]* The great Men set so good an Example to the People, that they cheerfully joined with them in this good Work.

Until they had made an End.] Till every Body had given something, or all that had a Mind had offered, and they saw no more would be given: Or till the Temple was repaired, and the Work finished.

Ver. 11. *Now it came to pass, that at what Time the Chest was brought unto the King's Office, by the Hand of the Levites,]* Who brought it from the Gate of the House of the LORD (*ver.* 8.) that the King's Officers might examine what the Contribution amounted unto.

And when they saw that there was much Money, the King's Scribe, and the High-Priest's Officer came and emptied the Chest, and took it, and carried it to his Place again.] By the Hands of the Levites who brought it thither.

Thus they did Day by Day, and gathered Money in Abundance.] This is related a little more largely than in *2 Kings* xii. 10. See what I have noted there.

Ver. 12. *And the King and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the Work of the Service of the House of the LORD, and hired Masons and Carpenters to repair the House of the LORD, and also such as wrought Iron and Brass, to mend the House of the LORD.]* See *2 Kings* xii. 11, 12, 13, &c. where

this is more distinctly related. Only here we are told who put the Money into the Hands of those that were to oversee the Work, *viz.* the King and *Jehoiada*, which is not there mentioned.

Ver. 13. *So the Workmen wrought, and the Work was perfected by them, and they set the House of God in his State, and strengthened it.]* For the Men were so honest, that there was no Time spent in calling them to an Account, how they laid out the Money; which they did very faithfully, *2 Kings* xii. 15.

Ver. 14. *And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the Money before the King and Jehoiada, whereof were made Vessels for the House of the LORD, even Vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and Spoons, and Vessels of Gold and Silver: and they offered Burnt-offerings in the House of the LORD continually, all the Days of Jehoiada.]* It is likely *Athaliah* and her wicked Sons had embezzel'd the holy Vessels, and employed them to the Service of *Baalim*. But till the Temple was compleatly repaired, none of the Money was converted to this other pious Use, of purchasing Vessels for the Sanctuary, as we are distinctly told in *2 Kings* xii. 13.

Ver. 15. *But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of Days when he died; an hundred and thirty Years old was he when he died.]* He seems to have lived long after this Work was finished, being well stricken in Years when he undertook it. Many such Examples of long-lived Men are collected by *Primate Usher* in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars i. Cap. xii. p. 70.

Ver. 16. *And they buried him in the City of David among the Kings,]* This shews a good Disposition in the King and the People at this Time, tho' they soon changed after he was dead and buried.

Because he had done good in Israel] The good he had done was in *Judah*, which is often in this History called *Israel*; because they were the Principal Tribe among the *Israelites*, and were indeed the true *Israel* of God, while they continued to Worship him sincerely.

Both towards God, and towards his House.] He had been an Instrument in restoring the Divine Worship, which now they were sensible was a great Blessing; and in repairing the Decays which were in the Temple, and furnishing it with Vessels for the Divine Service.

Ver. 17. *Now after the Death of Jehoiada,]* In his Life-time they durst not attempt this, for tho' he was old and feeble he retained great Authority.

Came the Princes of Judah, and made Obeisance to the King:] Some of the great Men, who in their Hearts continued *Baalites*, desired to be admitted into the King's Presence, and made their Addresses with great Reverence, pretending the greatest Devotion to his Service: And so falling into Discourse with him concerning the State of Religion, and other Affairs, desired at last, they might have leave to worship *Baal*, which *Jehoiada* had destroyed.

Then the King hearkened unto them.] To this dangerous Discourse he listened and consented to them: For fair Words and Flatteries easily deceive Princes, as *Grotius* here observes: And they wanted not specious Reasons to persuade the

the King not to be so strict, as to permit no God to be worshipped but only one. Some of the Jews fancy, that they flattered him with a Conceit, that he himself was worthy of divine Honour, being wonderfully preserved six Years in the House of God; as the People flattered Herod after his Oration, saying, *It is the Voice of a God, not of a Man.*

Ver. 18. *And they left the House of the LORD God of their Fathers, and served Groves and Idols:]* Tho' at the first, it is likely, these great Men only worshipped Baal themselves; yet they had their Emissaries who persuaded the People to join with them. So that the House of God was deserted, and they worshipped Idols in the Groves.

And Wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their Trespass.] Which God punished by the Hand of Hazael, King of Syria. See 2 Kings xii. 17, 18.

Ver. 19. *Yet he sent Prophets to them, to bring them back again unto the LORD, and they testified against them: but they would not give Ear.]* God's Goodness was wonderful in sending his Messengers to reduce such a base People, whose Wickedness was no less wonderful, in that they hearkened to the great Men among them rather than to the Prophets of Almighty God.

Ver. 20. *And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the Son of Jehoiada the Priest, which stood above the People, and said unto them,]* He had a Divine Motion to speak publickly to the People and reprove them; which that he might do and be heard of all, he got up into an high Place, where they might all both see and hear him. L'Empereur in his *Annotations upon Codex Middoth*, p. 80. thinks, he got up into some Desk or Pulpit in the Court of the Priests.

Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the Commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.] This he spake with great Vehemence, and, it is likely, enlarged upon this Subject so long, that it raised their Indignation. It is very remarkable, that tho' he spake by the Spirit of Prophecy, yet he only applied the general Prediction of Moses (Deut. xxxi. 16.) unto the present Time; that they might all learn to have a greater Regard to Moses, and continually meditate in his Law; unto which if they had attended, they would have easily discerned, who were true Prophets, and who were false.

Ver. 21. *And they conspired against him, and stoned him with Stones, at the Commandment of the King]* Who, it is likely, was present when he reprov'd them; or, being told what he said, sent an Order to kill him; which shews their Error, who think Joash was not an Idolater himself, but only connived at the great Mens Idolatry, and gave them Liberty to exercise it. Josephus rightly accuses him of this Sin, of which if he had not been guilty, he would not sure have slain the LORD's Prophet, who reprov'd it.

In the Court of the House of the LORD.] This shews, that they were there assembled; of which he took the Advantage, to put them in mind of their Duty; and, if we may believe the Jews, it was upon the great Day of Expiation;

for as Bochartus observes, *Hieroicoicon*, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 1. *Plebeius furor nullos habet limites, maxime cum Religionis velum illi obtenditur;* Popular Fury hath no Bounds, especially when the Veil of Religion is thrown over it.

Ver. 22. *Thus Joash the King remembered not the Kindness which Jehoiada his Father had done to him, but slew his Son:]* This Sin, besides the Contempt of God's Prophet, and of the Place where he was murdered, had an horrid Ingratitude in it; he being the Son of him, to whom the King owed his Life and his Kingdom; who assisted his Father at his Unction, as some think, because it is said, chap. xxiii. 11. *Jehoiada and his Sons anointed him.* But if Jehoiada was High-Priest, this Son is not reckoned among the Successors of Aaron, in 1 Chron. vi. And therefore it is likely he was a younger Son of Jehoiada; for if he had been his eldest, he would have had sufficient Authority, without the Spirit of Prophecy, to reprove Joash for his Idolatry; as Azariah resisted Uzziah when he would have usurped his Office. Ludovicus Capellus therefore thinks it probable, that his Brother the High-Priest conspiring at Joash's Apostasy, this younger Brother was inspired by God to reprove it; which Boldness Joash and his Courtiers thought they might punish with some Colour, by alledging, that he was not moved by God to it, but by his juvenile Heat, and Rashness, which they stirred up the People to chastise. See *Chronol. sacra*, p. 285.

And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.] And so he did, both by external Wars, v. 23. and by a Conspiracy against him, v. 25. It is not to be thought, that he died with a Spirit of Revenge; but by the Spirit of Prophecy foretold God would punish them for their hard Usage of him. Thus the Apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 14. speaks of Alexander the Copper-Smith, who had greatly opposed him, *The LORD reward him according to his Work;* which may be understood as a Sentence pronounced against him.

The Jews tell a strange Story in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. how Nebuzaradan, when he burnt the Temple, saw Blood bubbling up in a certain Place; and enquiring into the Matter, he understood, that a Priest and Prophet of the LORD had been slain there, because he foretold their Destruction. Whereupon he killed all the Doctors of the Law, but still the Blood was not at rest; then all the Scholars in their Schools, but still it was not quiet; then all the Priests, and at last many thousands of the People, but still it continued to bubble: So that he said, *Zachariah, Zachariah, wouldest thou have me to destroy all the Nation?* and then it rested, *See*. xxiv. In other Books they say, there were seven Transgressions upon this Day, in which they kill'd a Priest, a Prophet, a Judge, shed innocent Blood, polluted the Court of the Lord's House, and the Sabbath, and the Day of Expiation.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass at the End of the Year, that the Host of Syria came up against him:]* God was very speedy in punishing this and the rest of the Wickedness they had committed.

And they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed

destroyed all the Princes of the People from among the People,] Who had advised King Joash to restore the Worship of Baal; this was a distinct War from that mentioned in 2 Kings xii. 17, 18. Here Hazael is not said to have come up, but only his Army, and that a small Party. There it is not said, he took Jerusalem; but here he destroyed all the Princes. There it is said, Joash diverted Hazael from him by Presents; here, that they spoiled the City, and sent the Prey to Syria. We are therefore thus to understand the Whole, that when they did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, he sent Hazael to afflict them, who, we read in the Book of Kings, took Gath, and set his Face, as if he meant to set upon Jerusalem; whereupon Joash took the hallowed Things, and thereby procured his Departure from them; but in the End of the Year, Zachariah being murdered, this other War begun, which is here related in this Book.

And sent all the Spoil of them unto the King at Damascus.] Who was not here at this Invasion, but contented himself to send a few Forces against Judah, as the next Words tell us.

Ver. 24. For the Army of the Syrians came with a small Company of Men, and the LORD delivered a very great Host into their Hand,] This declar'd the Punishment the more remarkably to proceed from the Hand of God, who took away their Courage, so that with a great Host they could not resist an Handful of their Enemies.

Because they had forsaken the LORD God of their Fathers:] According to the Prophecy of Zechariah, v. 20.

So they executed Judgment against Joash.] They left him in a miserable Condition; for all Punishments are called JUDGMENTS among the Hebrews.

Ver. 25. And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great Diseases)] Many think, he was sorely wounded in the Battle; which brought him into great Diseases; and they increased, it is likely, by the Grief and Anguish of his Mind, to see his Country ruin'd; and by the Hatred and Contempt into which he was fallen, which encouraged his own Servants (as it follows) to conspire against him.

His own Servants conspired against him, for the Blood of the Sons of Jehoiada the Priest,] This doth not denote they killed more of his Sons than one; but, according to the frequent Use of this Language, the Plural Number is put for the Singular.

And slew him on his Bed, and he died:] Perhaps they were of his Bed-Chamber, and so could more easily compass their Design. However, he was so weak and feeble that he could make no Resistance, and was so little esteemed, that his Guard minded not what became of him. This Bed was in his House of Millo, as we read 2 Kings xii. 21. which is said to be in the Way to Silla; because there was another House of Millo, from which this is thus distinguished.

And they buried him in the City of David, but they buried him not in the Sepulchres of the Kings.] The same is said of Abaz, xxviii. 27. Tho' the People could not punish wicked Kings for their Impieties while they lived; yet they set Blots

upon their Memory when they were dead, as Grotius observes, *Lib. i. de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap. iii. Sect. 16. Egregio Temperamento*, as he speaks, by a most admirable Temperament; wherewith the Sacredness of the supreme Power was preserved, and yet Kings out of Fear of future Judgment were kept from altering Religion. But it may be doubted, whether this was done perpetually; for we find bad Kings builded themselves Sepulchres, 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26.

Ver. 26. And these are they that conspired against him; Zabad the Son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the Son of Shimrith a Moabite.] They were mungrel Fellows, whose Fathers were Jews, but their Mothers Aliens; for so the Manner of this impious People was, to make Marriages contrary to the Law.

Ver. 27. Now concerning his Sons, and the Greatness of the Burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the House of God, behold they are written in the Story of the Book of the Kings.] Some by Burdens understand the sore Punishments God inflicted on him, called in Scripture, The Burden of the LORD. Others, the great Tribute laid upon him by the Syrians; which was a heavy Burden, and a sore Punishment.

And Amaziah his Son reigned in his stead.] Though the Father was not beloved, it did not hinder the Succession of his Son.

C H A P. XXV.

Ver. 1. **A** Maziab was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine Years in Jerusalem: and his Mother's Name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.] See 2 Kings xiv. 1.

Ver. 2. And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect Heart.] He followed the right Religion, and worshipped God aright, but not with such Sincerity as David his Father did, 2 Kings xiv. 3. See Grotius upon c. xxvi. 4. where he observes his Son did in Fact what the Law required, but not with a solid Piety.

Ver. 3. And it came to pass, when the Kingdom was established to him, that he slew his Servants that had killed the King his Father.] They seem to have been Men of some Power and Interest in the Court, whom he durst not meddle withal till he was well settled in his Authority. See 2 Kings xiv. 5.

Ver. 4. But he slew not their Children, but did as it is written in the Law in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The Fathers shall not die for the Children, neither shall the Children die for the Fathers, but every Man shall die for his own Sin.] The very same is observed there, 2 Kings xiv. 6.

Ver. 5. Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds, according to the Houses of their Fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin:] All that belonged to one Family, he put under the Command of one Leader; whereby they became the more unanimous.

And he numbred them from twenty Years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice Men, able to go forth to War, that could
handle

handle Spear and Shield.] Behold here, how their Iniquities had diminished their Numbers, since the Days of Jehoshaphat (i. e. in the Space of eighty two Years) for this King could bring but three hundred thousand fighting Men into the Field, and Jehoshaphat brought near four Times as many. See upon Chap. xvii. ult.

Ver. 6. *He hired also an hundred thousand mighty Men of Valour out of Israel, for an hundred Talents of Silver.]* In two Things he shewed his Heart was not perfect with God; (as it is noted v. 2.) for, *first*, he sinned in making a League with the X Tribes, contrary to what the Prophet *Azariah* had declared, *Chap. xix.* And, *secondly*, he invited them to Battle without any Provocation; whereas he should have done, as the LORD commanded, *1 Kings xii. 24.* and left them to end their Quarrels among themselves; only repelling them if they had invaded him, but no more.

Ver. 7. *But there came a Man of God to him, saying, O King, let not the Army of Israel go with thee;]* This was the Prophet *Amos*, Father of the Prophet *Isaiah*, if we will believe the *Jews*, particularly *Kimchi* upon this Place; but this is a foolish Tradition, built on a Mistake that *Amos* the Prophet was *Isaiah's* Father.

For the LORD is with Israel, to wit, with all the Children of Ephraim.] In the *Targum* it is, *The WORD of the LORD will not help Israel;* who had highly offended him by the Idolatry, which *Jeroboam* of the Tribe of *Ephraim* introduced.

Ver. 8. *But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the Battle: God shall make thee fall before the Enemy: for God hath Power to help and to cast down.]* If he had a settled Resolution not to desist, the Prophet bid him go and try, whether with the greatest Power he could muster up, he should be able to prevail against the LORD; who could either help a few, or destroy a great many.

Ver. 9. *And Amaziah said unto the Man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred Talents, which I have given to the Army of Israel?]* That which stuck with him was the Money he was likely to lose; for they would not return that, if he dismissed them from his Army.

And the Man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.] This Objection was presently answered, if he would but obey God, and trust in his Goodness; who was able to give his faithful Servants more than that came to. And as *Grotius* notes, he is rich enough, who is impoverished for God's Sake.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah separated them, to wit, the Army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again:]* This argued some Goodness in him, tho' his Heart was not perfect with God.

Wherefore their Anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great Anger.] Because they looked upon them as Enemies of God, and durst not imploy them: *St. Hierom* thinks they carried Idols along with them.

Ver. 11. *And Amaziah strengthened himself,]* With his own Men only.

And led forth his People, and went to the Val-

ley of Salt, and smote of the Children of Seir,] Who dwelt in Mount *Seir*.

Ten thousand.] See *2 Kings xiv. 7.* where this Story is told more briefly; for what follows in the next Verse, is there omitted.

Ver. 12. *And other ten thousand left alive, did the Children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the Top of the Rock, and cast them down from the Top of the Rock, that they were broken all in Pieces.]* This was a very ancient Punishment among the *Romans*, as we learn from *Livy*, *Plutarch*, *Dionysius Halicarnassæus*, and others; and was used among other Nations, as *Mr. Selden* shews, *Lib. i. De Syne-driis, Cap. 17.* where he observes an illustrious Example of this among the *Israelites*, who threw *Jezabel* down upon the Stones out of the Windows, by the Command of *Jehu*.

Ver. 13. *But the Soldiers of the Army, which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to Battle,]* The Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet forbade him to join withal; and were therefore sent home.

Fell upon the Cities of Judah, from Samaria, even unto Beth-boron;] They went away from *Amaziah* in a great Rage, (v. 10.) which incited them to revenge the Affront put upon them, in this Manner; taking hold of the fair Opportunity, which presented itself, by his War with *Edom*, which had drained his Country of all the Forces that should have opposed them.

And smote three thousand of them, and took much Spoil.] Thus *Amaziah* was punished for having entred into a Society with Idolaters, tho' at the Prophet's Reproof he broke it off; and God, it is not unlikely, also suffered this Calamity to fall upon him, because he used his Victory over the *Edomites* with too much Cruelty.

Ver. 14. *Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the Slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the Gods of the Children of Seir,]* Which he should have burnt with Fire.

And set them up to be his Gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned Incense unto them.] A most prodigious Sottishness, as the Prophet shews him in the next Verse. *Abaz* was wiser, (tho' very wicked) who sacrificed to the Gods of those People who had overcome him; hoping they might be persuaded to help him also, xxviii. 23. Or, perhaps, *Amaziah* worshipped them, for Fear they should owe him a Spite, and contrive some Mischief against him, in Revenge of what he had done against the *Edomites*. See *Dr. Jackson*, in his Book of the Original of Belief, Chap. xvii. Parag. 5. 10.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the Anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a Prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the Gods of the People, which could not deliver their own People out of thine Hand?]* Nothing need be said more to convince him of his monstrous Stupidity; of which no Account could be given, unless we suppose them to have been such beautiful Images, that he looked upon them till he fell in Love with them, and doted upon them, so that he was bewitched into a senseless Idolatry. *Fabius Maximus* (as *Strigelinus* here notes) was much wiser,

wiser, who having conquered *Tarentum*, and being asked what should be done with their Gods, *Deos iratos Tarentinis relinqui iussit*, bad them leave their Gods that were angry with the *Tarentines*: For what Vanity is it, (as he adds) to hope for any Safety from those, that cannot preserve themselves? But such is the Madness of Idolaters, that it is reproved by sober Heathens.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass as he talked with him, that the King said unto him, Art thou made of the King's Counsel?*] Yes, undoubtedly, for he was made so by God; and did nothing but what belonged to his Office, *Jerem. i. 10.* But *Amaziah* thought not of this; but scornfully asked him, Who made him a Counsellor of State?

Forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten?] He bids him meddle no more in this Matter, lest he should be provoked to deal with him, as they did with *Zachariah*, *xxiv. 21.*

Then the Prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my Counsel.] He forbore to advise or reprove him any further, but only denounced the Sentence God had passed upon him, for this Contempt of him, and his other Sins; which came to pass, *v. 20, 27.*

Ver. 17. *Then Amaziah King of Judah took Advice,*] He would not be advised by the Prophet; but consulted those that led him to his Destruction.

And sent to Joash the Son of Jehoabaz, the Son of Jehu King of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the Face.] He was advised, it seems, without first desiring Satisfaction for the Damage done him, (*v. 12.*) in which perhaps *Joash* had no Hand, to make War upon him, and provoke him to Battle. See *2 Kings xiv. 17, 18, &c.* where this, and the following Verses are explained.

Ver. 18. *And Joash King of Israel sent to Amaziah King of Judah, saying, the Thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife: and there passed by a wild Beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the Thistle.*

Ver. 19. *Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites, and thine Heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at Home, why shouldest thou meddle to thine Hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou and Judah with thee?*] See this explained there, *2 Kings xiv. 9, 10.*

Ver. 20. *But Amaziah would not hear, for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the Hand of their Enemies, because they sought after the Gods of Edom.*] God blinds the Minds of those whom he intends to destroy for their Sins.

Ver. 21. *So Joash the King of Israel went up, and they saw one another in the Face, both he and Amaziah King of Judah, at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.*] For there was another *Beth-shemesh* in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Josh. xix. 38. Judges i. 33.*

Ver. 22. *And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every Man to his Tent.*] These two Verses are in the same Words, *2 Kings xiv. 11, 12.*

Ver. 23. *And Joash the King of Israel took A-*

maziah King of Judah, the Son of Joash, the Son of Jehoabaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem, and brake down the Wall of Jerusalem, from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner-gate, four hundred Cubits.] See there *v. 13.*

Ver. 24. *And he took all the Gold and the Silver, and all the Vessels that were found in the House of God with Obed-edom,*] The Targum here explains it, that *Obed-edom* consecrated these Vessels to God's Service, when *David* brought the Ark to his House, and God blessed him for his Care in looking after it; but *Kimchi* judges better, who takes *Obed-edom* to have been set over these Treasures, in the Custody of which his Son succeeded him.

And the Treasures of the King's House, the Hostages also, and returned to Samaria.] These Hostages the Targum takes for the Sons of the principal Men of the City; with whom the Generality of the Hebrew Interpreters agree: So *Jarchi*; the Children of Israel did not restore to *Amaziah* the Kingdom of Judah, but upon Condition, that he should give him the Children of great Men for a Security of his Fidelity, and that he should not rebel against him hereafter.

Ver. 25. *And Amaziah the Son of Joash, King of Judah, lived after the Death of Joash Son of Jehoabaz, King of Israel, fifteen Years.*] See upon *2 Kings xiv. 17.*

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of the Acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel?*] See there, *v. 18.*

Ver. 27. *Now after the Time that Amaziah did turn away from following the LORD, they made a Conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.*] He turned from God before the Death of *Joash*; therefore this Conspiracy was laid a great while before it was discovered; and then he fled to *Lachish*, where it took Effect. Or, as *Jacobus Capellus* conjectures (in his *Hist. sacra & exotica*) the Wars abroad put a Stop to this Sedition at home: But when they were over, and he returned home, and had a Son, then the Conspiracy was renewed again, under the specious Name of being Guardians to the young Prince, and taking better Care of him, than his Father was likely to do.

Ver. 28. *And they brought him upon Horses, and buried him with his Fathers in the City of Judah.*] That is, in the City of *David*, as it is explained, *1 Kings xiv. 20.*

C H A P. XXVI.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN all the People of Judah took *Uzziah*,] Who was called also *Azariah*, *2 Kings xiv. 21. xv. 1.*

Who was sixteen Years old, and made him King in the room of his Father Amaziah.] They made him King, when he was sixteen Years old; for his Father left him an Infant of four Years old: So that there was an *Interregnum* of twelve Years, the Kingdom being administered by a Vice-Roy, or by the High-Priest and the Elders. See *Ludovicus Capellus* in his *Chronologia Sacra*, p. 182.

Ver.

Ver. 2. *He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the King slept with his Fathers.]* He repaired it, after he had retaken it from the *Israelites*: This being, I suppose, one of the Cities, that the Soldiers, whom his Father *Amaziab* dismissed, had taken, (see 2 *Kings* xiv. 22.) and which, while he lived, he could not recover.

Ver. 3. *Sixteen Years old was Uzziab when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two Years in Jerusalem: his Mother's Name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.*

Ver. 4. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that his Father Amaziab did.]* These two Verses are the very same with those 2 *Kings* xv. 2, 3. See there.

Ver. 5. *And he sought God in the Days of Zechariah,]* He persisted in the true Religion, as long as *Zechariah* lived. By whom is not meant him whose Book of Prophecies is extant in the Bible, for he lived three hundred Years after; nor the Son of *Jehoiada*, who was slain some Years ago: But it is probable, the Son of that *Zechariah*, who was called after his Father's Name, and was eminent for his Divine Wisdom.

Who had Understanding in the Visions of God:] It is not said he was a Prophet, but that he was a Man very skilful in expounding the ancient Prophecies, and giving Instruction out of them; as *Grotius* understands it.

And as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.) Of which he gives Instances in the following Verses.

Ver. 6. *And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the Wall of Gath, and the Wall of Jabneh, and the Wall of Ashdod, and built Cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.]* From this Verse, unto the fifteenth, this Divine Writer shews, how excellent a Prince this was, and how God prospered him, while he continued truly religious: For he was skilful in Husbandry as well as in warlike Affairs; and was very solicitous for the Good of his People. The former of these is mentioned v. 10. and the other in the rest of the Verses; which tell us, how prudently he demolished all the Fortifications of his Enemies, on the Frontiers; and provided his own Frontiers with Works, Garisons, Arms and Engines of War.

Ver. 7. *And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbal, and the Mebunims.]* I have noted often before, that these *Mebunims* were a People in *Arabia deserta*. See 1 *Chron.* iv. 41. 2 *Chron.* xx. 1. *Judges* x. 11, 12. of which this Place gives a clear Proof.

Ver. 8. *And the Ammonites gave Gifts to Uzziab,]* Made him Presents, that they might preserve his Friendship.

And his Name spread abroad, even to the entering in of Egypt, for he strengthened himself exceedingly.] His Power grew so very great, that he was formidable, not only to the *Philistines* in the West, and to the *Arabians* and others in the East, but to the Borders of *Egypt* in the South.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, Uzziab built Towers in Je-*
V O L. II.

rusalem at the Corner-gate, and at the Valley-gate, and at the Turning of the Wall, and fortified them.] In his Father's Time the Wall of *Jerusalem* was broken down four hundred Cubits, as we read in the foregoing Chapter, v. 23. which, it is likely, was built again before this Time: But *Uzziab* made it stronger by Towers, which he built for its Defence; one of which was at that very Gate where the Breach ended, viz. the Corner-gate.

Ver. 10. *Also he built Towers in the Desert,]* To defend the Shepherds from the sudden Incursions of their Enemies; particularly the *Arabs*, who had formerly broken in upon them, xxi. 16.

And digged many Wells, for he had much Cattle, both in the low Country and in the Plains: Husbandmen also, and Vine-dressers in the Mountains,] Some therefore take the Towers forementioned to have been Country-houses, where Husbandmen dwelt; and where their Cattle in hard Weather were sheltered, and the Fruits of the Earth were laid up.

And in Carmel:] By this is not meant the famous Mount of that Name, (for that was not in the Tribe of *Judah*) but a very fertile Country, as the Word *Carmel* signifies in several Places, *Isaiah* xvi. 10. *Jerem.* ii. 7. xlviii. 33.

For he loved Husbandry.] As the greatest Men (I have often observed) did in ancient Times, and followed the Plough, and fed Cattle themselves. See 1 *Kings* xix. 19.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, Uzziab had an Host of fighting Men that went out to War by Bands,]* They were sent out by Parties, several Ways; for it appears by what follows they were very numerous.

According to the Number of their Account, by the Hand of Jeiel the Scribe,] He was the Secretary of War, (as we now speak) who took an Account of the several Bands of Men, that went out, and of the Number whereof they consisted.

And Maaseiah the Ruler, under the Hand of Hananiab, one of the King's Captains.] These two, I suppose, were great Officers, who were to oversee *Jeiel*, that there was no Fraud in his Account.

Ver. 12. *The whole Number of the Chief of the Fathers of the mighty Men of Valour, were two thousand and six hundred.]* This is sufficient to shew he had a very great Army, (there being so many principal Persons employed to command them) but a particular Account is given of them in the next Verse.

Ver. 13. *And under their Hand was an Army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made War with mighty Power, to help the King against the Enemy.]* Perhaps these were a standing Force, ready to repel their Enemies if they invaded them; besides that Host, which went forth by Bands, to annoy their Enemies on all Sides, (v. 11.) and then he was grown much more powerful than his Father. See xxv. 5.

Ver. 14. *And Uzziab prepared for them throughout all the Host, Shields, and Spears, and Helmets, and Habergeons, and Bows, and Slings to cast Stones.]* All Sorts of Arms, both defensive and
O o o o offensive;

offensive; but here is no mention of Swords; with which, I suppose, all the People were always provided.

Ver. 15. *And he made in Jerusalem Engines, invented by cunning Men, to be on the Towers, and upon the Bulwarks, to shoot Arrows and great Stones withal:]* The Targum by these Engines understands Towers perforated: Whereas the Text plainly tells us, they were Engines, out of which they shot Arrows and threw Stones, from the Towers and from the Walls. Bochartus thinks, the Word properly imports, they were contrived for the Projection of Stones, Lib. iii. of his *Phaleg*, Cap. vii. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. i. Cap. xxxv.

And his Name spread far abroad,] Beyond the entering in of Egypt (v. 8.) unto distant Countries.

For he was marvellously helped till he was strong.] God aided him so wonderfully in all his Undertakings, that he feared no Enemy, v. 7.

Ver. 16. *But when he was strong, his Heart was lifted up to his Destruction:]* To the Loss of all his Authority. How hard is it to bear great Prosperity with Moderation and humble Thankfulness!

For he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the Temple of the LORD, to burn Incense upon the Altar of Incense.] What should tempt him to this Folly, it is hard to give an Account. Perhaps he had a vain Ambition to imitate Heathen Princes, who in many Places executed the Priesthood also. And *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, that which puffed him up with Pride, was, that now he had not only a Son, viz. *Jotham*, but a Grand-son, *Abaz*, ad A. M. 3231.

Ver. 17. *And Azariah the Priest went in after him, and with him fourscore Priests of the LORD, that were valiant Men.]* See my Annotations on 1 Chron. vi. 10.

Ver. 18. *And they withstood Uzziab the King, and said unto him,]* It is plain by this, that they did not withstand his Attempt by Force of Arms; but by Reasons, Persuasions, and Exhortations. And perhaps, they surrounded the Altar, so that he could not, without offering Violence to them, approach it.

It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziab, to burn Incense unto the LORD, but to the Priests the Sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn Incense:] They represented to him, that he invaded the Office of the Priests, who were consecrated to this Service; which he was not, and therefore ought not to meddle with it.

Go out of the Sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed,] He had gone too far already, in going into the Holy-Place; whereby he had offended the Divine Majesty; but they beseech him to proceed no further.

Neither shall it be for thine Honour from the LORD God.] They represent to him, that he could get no Honour, but lose very much by aspiring to this Dignity of the Priesthood, which the LORD had placed in other Hands.

Ver. 19. *Then Uzziab was wroth, and had a Censer in his Hand to burn Incense:]* Which he would not lay aside upon their Admonition;

but fell into a great Passion, because he was hindered in that which he designed.

And while he was wroth with the Priests,] And perhaps threatening, that he would have his Will.

The Leprosy even rose up in his Forehead,] Where it could not be concealed, but was apparent to all that were present.

Before the Priests in the House of the LORD, from beside the Incense-Altar.] Where they stood to keep him from it.

Ver. 20. *And Azariah the chief Priest, and all the Priests looked upon him, and behold, he was leprous in his Forehead, and they thrust him out from thence,]* There was no need to use Force to thrust him out, for he hastened himself, as it follows, to be gone: Therefore they only admonished him most earnestly to depart, because the Law permitted not a Leper to remain in a City, much less to come into the House of God.

Yea, himself hastened also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.] And he was afraid of a sorer Punishment, if he staid there. See *Grotius De Imperio S. P. circa sacra*, p. 251.

Ver. 21. *And Uzziab the King was a Leper unto the Day of his Death,]* The Punishment was Capital for meddling rashly with Divine Ministrations, as we see from the Beginning, in the Case of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, Levit. x. 1, 2. and see *Numb.* iii. 10. xviii. 7. Now the Leprosy was a Kind of Death, because it separated those who were smitten with it from the Society of Men, as if they were dead, and no Part of this World.

And dwelt in a several House being a Leper, for he was cut off from the House of the LORD:] In the Hebrew the Words are, *he dwelt in an House of Freedom*; so such Places were called, because such as were there, were exempt from the common Affairs, and shut up from the Conversation of Men; whence such as are laid in their Grave, are said to be *free among the Dead*, (Psal. lxxxviii. 5.) because removed from all the Affairs and Conversation of the World. See *Dr. Hammond* upon that Place, Annot. c.

And Jotham his Son was over the King's House, judging the People of the Land.] See 2 Kings xv. 5.

Ver. 22. *Now the rest of the Acts of Uzziab, first and last, did Isaiah the Prophet, the Son of Amos, write.]* This shews, the Prophets were wont (as I have before observed) to write the History of their own Times. For *Isaiah* prophesied in the Beginning of *Uzziab's* Reign, and, as *Abarbinel* thinks, before *Hosea*, who lived in the same Period of Time, and prophesied before *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*.

Ver. 23. *So Uzziab slept with his Fathers, and they buried him with his Fathers in the Field of the Burial which belonged to the Kings;]* This was in the City of *David*, as we read in 2 Kings xv. 7.

For they said, He is a Leper:] Therefore he was not buried in the Sepulchre of the Kings his Predecessors; but had a several Burial-place when he was dead, as he had a several House while he lived.

And Jotham his Son reigned in his stead.

C H A P. XXVII.

Ver. 1. **J**otham was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen Years in Jerusalem: his Mother's Name also was Jerushabab, the Daughter of Zadok.

Ver. 2. And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that his Father Uzziab did:] The very same is said in 2 Kings xv. 33, 34.

Howbeit, he entered not into the Temple of the LORD.] Some imagine, he was so frightened at what befel his Father, that he did not so much as go into the Court of the Temple, or that he did not offer Sacrifices in the Temple, but in High-Places. But this doth not well agree with the Words foregoing: Therefore the Meaning rather is, that he imitated his Father in all that was good in him; but did not profanely enter into the Temple to offer Incense, as he did.

And the People did yet corruptly.] For they offered Incense in High-Places, 2 Kings xv. 35. and, as some think, committed Idolatry.

Ver. 3. He built the high Gate of the House of the LORD,] It was built before by Solomon, but he repaired it, (2 Kings xv. 35.) and, as some think, added a very glorious Structure to it.

And on the Wall of Ophel he built much.] The Targum translates it, a Palace: But others understand by Ophel an high Place, or Cliff, where there was a Tower. Pellicanus thinks, the Meaning is, that he much beautified, as well as repaired the Porch of the Lord's House, which was an hundred and twenty Cubits high.

Ver. 4. Moreover, he built Cities in the Mountains of Judah, and in the Forests he built Castles and Towers.] That is, he took Care to fortify his Kingdom strongly on all Sides, against his Enemies.

Ver. 5. He fought also with the King of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them.] This People had been entirely subdued by David, as we read 2 Sam. x. and c. xii. 31. but now it seems they had recovered so much Strength, that they invaded the Country of Judah; but were overthrown by Jotham.

And the Children of Ammon gave him the same Year an hundred Talents of Silver, and ten thousand Measures of Wheat, and ten thousand of Barley.] He made them Tributaries to him; and they began the very same Year to pay the Tribute.

So much did the Children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second Year and the third.] Either this was the Agreement, that for three Years they should make this Acknowledgment; or, at the three Years End they grew so strong again, that they refused to continue it longer.

Ver. 6. So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his Ways before the LORD his God.] Directed his Counsels and Actions aright, according to the Rule of God's Word. Solomon Jarchi here observes, that all the Kings of Judah had some ill Thing laid to their Charge, but only Jotham: For David himself sinned grievously in the Matter of Uriah: Solomon was drawn away by his Wives to countenance Idolatry: Rehoboam forsook the Law of God; and Abijah walked in his Steps: Asa took the Treasures of God's House, and sent them to the King of Syria; and likewise put the Prophet in the Stocks: Jehoshaphat entred into Society with the Wicked; and so he goes on with the rest. But in Jotham (saith he) there is no Fault found, which is a wonder, when there were so few good People among them. For his Integrity was not so great, as the Corruption of his People, who immediately after his Death joined with Abaz in his abominable Idolatries.

Ver. 7. Now the rest of the Acts of Jotham, and all his Wars, and his Ways,] He had Wars not only with the Ammonites, but with the Syrians, and with the Ten Tribes, as may be gathered from 2 Kings xv. 37.

Lo, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.] The Affairs of the Kings of Judah are commonly said to be recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah: But this King's Actions, it seems, were so eminent, that the Israelites also recorded some of them in their Books.

Ver. 8. He was five and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen Years in Jerusalem.] This was said before, v. 1. and it is not easy to give an Account, why it is here repeated; unless it be true, which Kimchi saith, that Jotham was born the same Year that his Father was struck with a Leprosy, but was not King till he grew up, and was instructed in the Government; which was managed during his Minority by the Princes of the People: But Jacobus Capellus rather thinks, he reigned sixteen Years by himself alone; and then took his Son into Society with him in the Government of the Kingdom.

Ver. 9. And Jotham slept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City of David: and Abaz his Son reigned in his stead.] See 2 Kings xv. 38.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. **A**H AZ was twenty Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen Years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, like David his Father.] See 2 Kings xvi. 2. where there are the very same Words.

Ver. 2. For he walked in the Ways of the Kings of Israel, and made also molten Images for Baalim.] He not only worshipped the golden Calves, (which was the Way of the Kings of Israel) but many other Gods of the Nations round about; which are all comprehended under the Name of Baalim. See what I have noted upon Judges ii. 11.

Ver. 3. Moreover, he burnt Incense in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom,] Where Moloch was worshipped.

And burnt his Children in the Fire,] Or, made them to pass thro' the Fire; for the Words are ambiguous. The Targum here saith, the WORD of the LORD snatched Hezekiah out of the Fire; because he foresaw three Saints would spring from him; and here he tells a long Tale of Hananiab, Misbael and Azariab, who were thrown into the fiery Furnace.

After the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the Children of Israel.] This was the most detestable Idolatry that was practised among the ancient Inhabitants of Canaan, as appears from Levit. xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3, 4, &c.

Ver. 4. He sacrificed also, and burnt Incense in the High-Places.] Not unto God, but unto his Idols, whom he worshipped also on the Hills, and under every green Tree; as it here follows.

Ver. 5. Wherefore the LORD his God] The LORD is called his God, because he was so by the Right of his Dominion over him, and his Kindness to him for his Father's sake.

Delivered him into the Hand of the King of Syria,] That by this Punishment he might return from his evil Ways. These two Kings, Rezin King of Syria, and Pekah King of Israel, seem to have come upon him together, whereby he was put to some Distress.

And they smote him,] That is, the Syrians slew many of his People.

And carried away a great Multitude of them Captives, and brought them to Damascus:] This was after that Invasion mentioned 2 Kings xvi. 5.

And he was also delivered into the Hand of the King of Israel, who smote him with a great Slaughter.] As is related in the next Verse.

Ver. 6. For Pekah the Son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one Day, which were all valiant Men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their Fathers.] Who therefore forsook them, and took away their Courage, that they could make no Resistance; for otherwise, it had not been possible to make so great a Slaughter in one Day.

Ver. 7. And Zichri, a mighty Man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the King's Son, and Azrikam the Governor of the House, and Elkanah that was next to the King.] They seem to have taken Jerusalem, (tho' they did not keep it) and to have slain these great Persons. The Targum translates the last Words, the Arkapta of the King: That is, as some interpret it, the Captain of his Host. But our Translation comes nearest to the Hebrew, Second to the King: Who was inferior to the King alone; inasmuch that the LXX translate it διὰδοχον, he that immediately followed the King, and succeeded him; his Viceroy, as some interpret it.

Ver. 8. And the Children of Israel carried away Captive of their Brethren two hundred thousand Women, Sons and Daughters, and took also away much Spoil from them,] This is an Argument that they were quite dispirited, and had no Heart to defend themselves, being not only slaughtered like Sheep, but carried Captive by Drones.

And brought the Spoil to Samaria.] Into their own Country, towards Samaria; but they had not yet brought it into the City of Samaria, ver. 13.

Ver. 9. But a Prophet of the LORD was there, whose Name was Oded:] By this it appears that God continued his Prophets among the Israelites, to bring them to Repentance, if they would have hearkened to their Admonitions.

And he went out before the Host that came to Samaria,] Bringing their Captives and Spoil in great Triumph thither.

And said unto them, Behold, because the LORD God of your Fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your Hand,] He would not have them lifted up with their Victory; which was not to be ascribed so much to their Valour, as to the Anger of God against Judah, who abandoned them to their Fury.

And ye have slain them in a Rage that reacheth up unto Heaven.] That had no Measure, and cried to Heaven for Vengeance upon the Israelites.

Ver. 10. And now ye purpose to keep under the Children of Judah and Jerusalem] This seems to denote that they had sacked Jerusalem.

For Bond-men and Bond-women unto you:] To use them as Slaves of another Nation, of whom they might make Money, by selling them to their Neighbour, or make them Drudges to serve them for nought.

But are there not with you, even with you, Sins against the LORD your God?] He bids them consider, that they who thought themselves God's Favourites because he had made them so victorious, had Sins enough to answer for; for which if he punished them as they deserved, they might be reduced to the same Condition with the Brethren of Judah.

Ver. 11. Now hear me therefore, and deliver the Captives again, which ye have taken captive of your Brethren: for the fierce Wrath of the LORD is upon you.] If they did not set them at Liberty, he threatens sudden Destruction, which was ready to break forth upon them for their Cruelty.

Ver. 12. Then certain of the Heads of the Children of Ephraim, Azariah the Son of Johanan, Berechiah the Son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the Son of Shallum, and Amasa the Son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the War,] These Persons had some Goodness in them, as well as Courage, and great Authority with the People and Soldiers.

Ver. 13. And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the Captives hither:] That is, into the City of Samaria.

For whereas we have offended against the LORD already,] By making such an unmerciful Slaughter of their Brethren.

Ye intend to add more to our Sins, and to our Trespas: for our Trespas is great, and there is fierce Wrath against Israel.] Or, tho' our Trespas is great, and deserves to be punished, with a fierce Wrath, as we have exercised against Judah.

Ver. 14. So the armed Men left the Captives and the Spoil, before the Princes and all the Congregation.] To dispose of them as they pleased. A wonderful Instance of Obedience, in restoring not only the Captives which were very valuable, but all the Spoil also, which, no doubt, was considerable. What might not these great Men have done to bring them to repent of their Idolatry, if they had been truly religious, and exerted their Authority?

Ver. 15. And the Men which were expressed by Name,] There were some nominated and appointed, I suppose, by the Heads of the People,

ple, to take care of the Captives, and see them well treated.

Rose up, and took the Captives, and with the Spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat, and to drink, and anointed them,] They not only gave them necessary Sustenance, but refreshed their Weariness, like the good Samaritan in the Parable, who poured Oil and Wine into the Wounds of a poor Traveller. This was an extraordinary Goodness, not only to release poor Captives without doing them Hurt, or making any Gain of them, but to dismiss them with a *Viaticum* (as *Strigelius* speaks) giving them all things necessary for their Return home. And it was still a greater Kindness to provide *Vehicles* (as it here follows) for the infirm Multitude, and bring them to their own Country without hard Travel.

And carried all the feeble of them upon Asses, and brought them to Jericho, the City of Palm-trees, to their Brethren: then they returned to Samaria.] So great was the Power of the Prophet at this Time, that he turned their barbarous Cruelty into the tenderest Humanity. But, as I said, they were not so easily converted from Idolatry, unto which they had so strong an Inclination, that nothing could persuade them to forsake it.

Ver. 16. *At that time did King Abaz send unto the King of Assyria to help him.]* When Rezin King of Syria invaded him, 2 Kings xvi. 6, 7. This is the first Time that we read of the King of Assyria, excepting 2 Kings xv. 19. where Pul King of Assyria is mentioned as a powerful Prince, who invaded the Israelites. Before his Time we read nothing of that Monarchy, which grew by Degrees to its Greatness from small Beginnings. For in David's Time, or whensoever Psalm lxxxiii was written, the King of Assyria was but a petty Prince, like those of Moab and Ammon, and the like, with whom he joined, (ver. 8.) to enslave the Israelites; but now had swallowed up all those little Princes, and grown to such an Height that none could stand before them. But if their large Empire had been a long standing, we should in all Probability have heard of them before this Time, as we do often afterwards.

Ver. 17. *For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away Captives.]* When Rezin fell upon them, the Edomites took that Advantage, and made great Ravage in the Land of Judah.

Ver. 18. *The Philistines also had invaded the Cities of the Low-country,]* Which lay next to them.

And of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth-shean, and Ajalon, and Gederath, and Shoco with the Villages thereof, and Timnah with the Villages thereof, Gimzo also and the Villages thereof: and they dwelt there.] They prevailed so far as to make an Inroad further into the Country of Judah; and not only possessed themselves of the Cities here mentioned, but settled in them. For in this weak Condition into which Abaz was fallen, they took their Revenge for the Mischief, which Uzziab had done them, who subdued them as far as Gath, c. xxvi. 6.

Ver. 19. *For the LORD brought Judah low, because of Abaz]* It was purely upon his Account that God gave them up into the Hand of the Philistines; for that very Year in which Abaz died, the Prophet Isaiah foretold his Son should afflict them, Isa. xiv. 27, 28, 29. and accordingly Hezekiah smote them as far as Gaza, 2 Kings xviii. 8.

King of Israel;] We cannot gather from hence, that he is called King of Israel, because he walked in their Ways, for a good King is so called, c. xx. 2. And the Masorites observe, that six Times we read the King of Israel instead of King of Judah, because they all descended from Israel. So Beckius here expounds it, in a large Sense, he was King of Israel: For Israel is not here opposed to Judah, but comprehends it. Therefore the Targum hath, the King of Judah: And so the LXX, and the Vulgar Latin. For Israel was once the Name of the whole People, and after the Division of the Kingdom, the two Tribes were still a Part of Israel in the ancient Sense of the Word. See Buxtorf, who observes out of the Hebrew Grammarians, that the Manner of the Scripture is to put the Genus sometimes for the Species, and the Species for the Genus. *Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis*, Cap. 7. Par. ii.

For he made Judah naked,] Deprived them of the Divine Protection, by his foul Transgressions.

And transgressed sore against the LORD.] The Targum renders it, the House of Judah ceased from the Worship of God; which Abaz, in a Manner wholly abolished, and thereby transgressed more grievously than all his Predecessors.

Ver. 20. *And Tiglath-pilezer King of Assyria came unto him,]* As he desired, by the Messengers he sent to him, ver. 10.

And distressed him, but strengthened him not.] In 2 Kings xvi. 9. it is said, that he did help him; how therefore did he distress him? Both these are true, for as he did come to his Assistance against the King of Syria, so he took Damascus, carried the People Captive, and delivered Abaz from the Power of the Syrians, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8, 9. But this did Abaz little Good, for he helped him not to recover the Cities the Philistines had taken from him, nor did he lend him any Forces, nor enable him to recruit his own; but rather weakened him by exhausting his Treasures, and by destroying Samaria, whereby the Way was opened to invade his Country the more easily in the next Reign. Thus many Countries in latter Ages, by calling in the Assistance of some foreign Prince against their Enemies, have been overrun, and conquered by those who came to their Help.

Ver. 21. *For Abaz took away a Portion out of the House of the LORD, and out of the House of the King, and of the Princes, and gave it unto the King of Assyria: but he helped him not.]* Did not make his Condition better, but so much the worse. See 2 Kings xvi. 8.

Ver. 22. *And in the Time of his Distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD:]* He was not at all amended by the fore Calamities which fell on him, but introduced more Idolatry than had been practised before.

This

This is that King Abaz.] The Word *Hu* is sometimes a Word of Contempt, as *Kimchi* observes, *Gen.* xxxvi. ult. *Numb.* xxvi. 9. And *Abaz* deserved to be branded, as the most notorious Offender that had ever been among the Kings of *Judab*: And was remarkable for this also, that he never prospered in any thing he undertook.

Ver. 23. *For he sacrificed unto the Gods of Damascus, which smote him:]* A most monstrous Stupidity, to imagine they had any Power over him, who could not defend themselves from *Tiglath-Pilezer*: But being of Opinion that they were Gods, he sacrificed to them to appease them, that they might do him no further Hurt; doing as the ancient *Romans*, who wooed by larger Sacrifices the Gods of their Enemies to come over to their Side, and be their Friends; as *Dr. Jackson* discourses, in his *Original of Unbelief*, Chap. xvii. Paragr. 5.

And he said, Because the Gods of the Kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me:] Not against the Syrians, but he foolishly imagined they might help him against the *Edomites*, *Philistines*, and other Enemies.

But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel.] They were so far from being his Friends, that they proved the Destruction of him, and of his whole Country: For tho' it was not in their Power to do him either Harm or Good, yet his worshipping of them undid him and all his People.

Ver. 24. *And Abaz gathered together the Vessels of the House of God, and cut in Pieces the Vessels of the House of God,]* That the Priests might not be able to minister before God for want of them, *c.* xxix. 19. and that he might employ the Money he made of them (for what he cut in Pieces, I suppose, he sold) in building *Altars*, (as it follows) *in every Corner of Jerusalem.*

And shut up the Doors of the House of the LORD,] That no Man might come to worship God there, but sacrifice every where, but only where they should: And this continued till the Beginning of his Son's Reign, *c.* xxix. 3.

Ver. 25. *And in every several City of Judab he made High-Places to burn Incense unto other Gods,]* He took care the People should not think of going up to *Jerusalem*; by erecting, at his own Charge, High-Places in every City, wherein to perform Divine Service to what God they pleased.

And provoked to anger the LORD God of his Fathers.] With whom he did not join other Gods, but worshipped him not at all.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of his Acts, and of all his Ways, first and last, behold they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judab and Israel.]* In *2 Kings* xvi. 19. it is only said, they were written in the Book of the Kings of *Judab*: But *Ezra* it seems found that the Book of the Kings of *Israel* contained some memorable Passages of his Reign; there being, as is here recorded, great Wars between them and *Judab*.

Ver. 27. *And Abaz slept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the Sepulchres of the Kings of Israel:]* They are called the Kings

of *Israel*, because they had an ancient Right to govern the whole twelve Tribes.

And Hezekiah his Son reigned in his Stead.

C H A P. XXIX.

Ver. 1. **H** *Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty Years old, and he reigned nine and twenty Years in Jerusalem: and his Mother's Name was Abijah the Daughter of Zechariah.]* See upon *2 Kings* xviii. 1, 2. where I have noted, that *Abaz* therefore was very young when he begat *Hezekiah*. And we may grant, as *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, that he was but *ten Years* old (tho', as I have there shewn, *Bochartus* thinks he was more) for tho' this was wonderful, yet not incredible, as his Words are. For he refers us to *Scaliger* in his first Oration against *Paræus*, where he mentions a City, in which a Boy not twelve Years old begat a Child, of a Girl, a Cousin of his not ten Years old: And adds, *Rem notam narro, &c.* I tell a known Story, whose Memory is still fresh in *Aquitain*. See his *Histor. sacra & exotica, ad Annum Mundi 2292.*

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that David his Father had done.]* The same is recorded in *2 Kings* xviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *He, in the first Year of his Reign, in the first Month,]* This demonstrates his great Piety and Zeal for God, that he began so soon to reform Religion, and did not stay till he was established in his Throne. For the surest way to establish himself, he thought was to establish true Religion; tho' he run a great Hazard in attempting the abolishing Idolatry, which had been confirmed by some Years Prescription.

Opened the Doors of the House of the LORD,] Which his Father had shut up, *c.* xxviii. 24.

And repaired them.] For by long Neglect they were gone to Decay.

Ver. 4. *And he brought in the Priests and the Levites,]* Whose Business it was to take Care of Religion, and look after Things sacred, and admonish Kings of their Duty. But *Hezekiah* was beforehand with them, and prevented their Endeavours; not only exciting them to reform what was amiss, but using the most proper Arguments to press them to it.

And gathered them together into the East-street,] Which was before the East-gate of the Temple, where the Entrance into it was.

Ver. 5. *And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the House of the LORD God of your Fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the Holy-Place.]* The Abomination, as the *Jews* translate it: That is, the Altar of *Damascus*, and all the Idols that were upon it. See *2 Kings* xvi. 10, &c. These were brought by *Abaz* into the Temple; that is, into the Court of the Priests, which is called the *Holy-Place*, in *Levit.* vi. 16, &c.

Ver. 6. *For our Fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the Eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him,]* He urges them to this pious Work, from the Consideration of the great Sin of their Forefathers, and their horrible

horrible Contempt of the Service of God, as it follows in the next Words.

And have turned away their Faces from the Habitation of the LORD, and turned their Backs.] This seems to signify that *Abaz* brought in a Way of Worship directly contrary to the Law of God; which commanded them to worship toward the Ark, which was plac'd in the West: But he ordered they should turn their Backs upon that (which was a Disrespect, and Contumely to the Divine Majesty) and worship toward the East, where he had set his Altar: And at last he shut up the Doors of the Temple, that they should not worship there at all, as it is again observed in the next Verse.

Ver. 7. *Also they have shut up the Doors of the Porch,]* That none might enter into the Temple, but it might be left a desolate Place.

And put out the Lamps,] The Priests having nothing to do there.

And have not burnt Incense, nor offered Burnt-offerings in the holy Place, unto the God of Israel.] But made high Places in every City, to burn Incense unto other Gods, as it is ver. 25. of the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore the Wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem,]* After the Confession of their Sins, he represents to them the Calamities wherewith God had punished them.

And he hath delivered them to Trouble, to Astonishment, and to Hissing, as you see with your Eyes.] Sent such a pannick Fear and Terror into them (such as is mentioned c. xx. 22.) that they could not stand before their Enemies, but became a Scorn to them; for it had not been possible, that they should slay such a vast Number of them in one Day (as we read c. xxviii. 6.) if they had not been perfectly astonished, and bereaved of their Senses.

Ver. 9. *For lo, our Fathers have fallen by the Sword, and our Sons and our Daughters, and our Wives are in Captivity for this.]* Or rather, *were* in Captivity, till the tender Mercy of God released them; and it is likely some were still in Captivity to other Nations, tho' the Israelites had dismissed their Captives; for they were distressed in *Abaz's* Time by the *Edomites*, and *Philistines*; the former of which carried away Captives, as we read c. xxviii. 17, 18.

Ver. 10. *Now it is in mine Heart to make a Covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce Wrath may turn away from us.]* He resolved therefore to renew the Covenant between God and the People, because he foresaw there was immediate Destruction impending upon the whole Nation for their Iniquities, unless they did heartily and speedily repent of them; for they were grown to the greatest Height of Impiety, his Father having by Degrees proceeded to the utmost Pitch of Idolatry; which though God had many Ways punished very severely, yet he persisted in his Wickedness; and to the very End of his Life amended nothing, but grew worse and worse; therefore this good King thought it absolutely necessary forthwith to make a thorough Reformation, and engage the whole Nation in a solemn Covenant to worship God purely. Thus *Conradus Pellicanus*.

Ver. 11. *My Sons, be not now negligent:]* He beseeches the *Levites*, in the most tender Language, no longer to go along with the People in their Error, but to bestir themselves to make them better.

For the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that you should minister unto him, and burn Incense.] This was the Work of the Priests, unto whom he speaks as well as to the *Levites*, remembering them what their Office was, to which they were peculiarly chosen, viz. to take care to see his Laws observed, and to minister to him, according to his Directions; and therefore not to omit the Performance of their Duty in the House of God, now that it was open to them.

Ver. 12. *Then the Levites arose, Mabath the Son of Amasai, and Joel the Son of Azariah, of the Sons of the Kohathites: and of the Sons of Merari; Kish the Son of Abdi, and Azariah the Son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joab the Son of Zimnah, and Eden the Son of Joab:*

Ver. 13. *And of the Sons of Elisaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the Sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:*

Ver. 14. *And of the Sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the Sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.]* These were principal Persons among the *Levites*, who readily complied with the King's Exhortation, and engaged their Brethren also (as it here follows) in the same Work, which they undertook, of cleansing the House of the LORD.

Ver. 15. *And they gathered their Brethren, and sanctified themselves,]* By washing their Bodies, I suppose, and other Rites prescribed by the Law.

And came, according to the Commandment of the King, by the Words of the LORD, to cleanse the House of the LORD.] The King had a great Power in Things commanded by God: The Exercise of which Power is here very properly called, *The Commandment of the King, by the Words of the LORD*: Or, as in the Margin, *In the Business of the LORD*. The like we read c. xxx. 12. See *Grotius* in his Book *de Imperio summarum Potestatum circa sacra*, p. 59.

Ver. 16. *And the Priests went into the inner Part of the House of the LORD, to cleanse it,]* That is, into the Sanctuary (for into the most Holy none might go but the High Priest) whither the *Levites* might not come.

And brought out all the Uncleaness that they found in the Temple of the LORD, into the Court of the House of the LORD.] That is, the Court of the Priests, where the *Levites* attended upon them, and ministered unto them.

And the Levites took it to carry it out abroad into the Brook Kidron.] They cast the Filth into the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, or *Tophet*, thro' which *Kidron* ran, 2 Kings xxiii. 10, 12.

Ver. 17. *Now they began on the first Day of the first Month to sanctify,]* This was the Month *Abib*, as our great Primate *Usher* observes, but not on the Day he was made King, but nine Months after his Father's Death: See his *Chronolog. sacra*, p. 82.

And on the eighth Day of the Month came they to the Porch of the LORD:] Which they cleansed together with the outward Courts, and the Chambers

Chambers of the Temple, in which they spent eight Days more, as the next Words signify: The House having been long shut up, and no Body coming into it, must needs be full of Dust, and the Vessels become rusty; in the scouring of which, and restoring them to their Splendor, and wiping the Walls of the House, they must necessarily spend a great deal of Time, for the Neglect had been great, and their Diligence extraordinary; it being probable, that this Sanctification was by washing both the Walls of the House, and the Floor, and every Thing else.

So they sanctified the House of the LORD in eight Days, and in the sixteenth Day of the first Month they made an End.] The Pollution was so universal, and their Exactness so great in restoring all Things to their Purity, that they could not finish their Work in less Time. Some think they spent eight Days in cleansing all the Places from Filth; and other eight Days in sanctifying the Temple, and all belonging to it; tho' how this Sanctification was performed, we are not told.

Ver. 18. *Then they went in to Hezekiah the King, and said, We have cleansed all the House of the LORD, and the Altar of Burnt-offering, with all the Vessels thereof, and the Shew-bread Table, with all the Vessels thereof.]* All which they set in their right Places, after they had removed all Defilements from them.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, all the Vessels which King Abaz in his Reign did cast away in his Transgression,]* The Targum explains it very significantly, *Which he profaned, and rendred abominable by Idols of other Countries, particularly from Damascus. And so Kimchi, Which he translated to idolatrous Uses.*

Have we prepared and sanctified:] The Targum gives a quite contrary Sense of the Words, *We have set them apart and bidden them, and prepared others in their Place.* And indeed the Talmudists (as Beckius here observes upon the Targum) are of Opinion, that all the Vessels which Abaz profaned in his Reign were set aside, and others consecrated in their stead; for they thought them not any longer fit to be employed in the Divine Service: But Kimchi understands these Words as we do, that they purged and purified the Vessels which he had profaned.

And behold, they are before the Altar of the LORD.] Before the Altar of Burnt-offering (I suppose) unto which they went the next Morning, and offered Sacrifices; with the Blood of which, perhaps, they were further purified.

Ver. 20. *Then Hezekiah the King rose early, and gathered the Rulers of the City, and went up to the House of the LORD.]* Now he engaged the principal Persons in the City to join with him in his Reformation of Religion, when all Things were ready for the Performance of the Duties thereof.

Ver. 21. *And they brought seven Bullocks, and seven Rams, and seven Lambs, and seven He-goats, for a Sin-offering for the Kingdom, and for the Sanctuary, and for Judah:]* It is very observable, that the Word *Tsaphir*, which here signifies the He-goat, was never used by the He-

brews till after the Captivity of *Babylon*, when we find it in *Daniel*, who lived in the Captivity, c. viii. 21. And here being used, and in no other Place beside, it is some Argument, that *Ezra* was the Author of this Book, which he wrote after their Return from that Captivity, in which he had learned the *Chaldee* Language, and thence mixed some *Chaldee* Words with the *Hebrew*, whereof this is one: And therefore *Daniel*, to explain it, adds the *Hebrew* Word *Seir* to it; just as in the *New Testament*, the Word $\delta\ \omega\alpha\tau\eta\epsilon$ is added to *Abba*.

And he commanded the Priests the Sons of Aaron to offer them on the Altar of the LORD.] There are two Laws in the Books of *Moses*, requiring a Sacrifice to be offered for the Sin of the whole Congregation, when they were in an Error. The first is in *Levit. iv. 13, 14.* where a Bullock is required to be offered, when they were ignorantly seduced to do something forbidden by the Law, tho' they did not forsake their Religion. The other is in *Numb. xv. 22, 23, 24.* where a Goat is commanded to be offered together with a Bullock, when they acted contrary to their Religion, and were fallen by Error into the Practice of external Rites: And the Bullock was offered for a Burnt-offering in Token that they owned no other God but the LORD, nor any other Religion but that prescribed by *Moses*: And the Goat for a Sin-offering, that they might expiate the Guilt they had contracted, by doing contrary to their Religion. Now this good King *Hezekiah* being sensible, that they had not only acted contrary to their Religion, but in effect abolished it, by shutting up the Doors of the Temple, and omitting the daily Sacrifice, and every where exercising strange Worship, appointed seven Bullocks for a Burnt-offering, and as many Goats for a Sin-offering (tho' the Law never requir'd more than one Goat) thinking these numerous Sacrifices (together with Rams and Lambs) were, if not necessary, yet very fit, because of the great and long Neglect of his Divine Service, and because of the Multitude and long Continuance of their other Sins against the LORD, for which they now begged Forgiveness. Thus after the Captivity they offered twelve Bullocks for Burnt-offerings, and twelve Goats for Sin-offerings (*Ezra viii. 35.*) according to the Number of the Children of *Israel*: For as they knew one Goat was necessary, so they thought a great Number would be becoming in such Cases.

Ver. 22. *So they killed the Bullocks, and the Priests received the Blood, and sprinkled it on the Altar: likewise when they had killed the Rams, they sprinkled the Blood upon the Altar: they killed also the Lambs, and they sprinkled the Blood upon the Altar.]* According to the Direction of the Law, *Levit. viii. 15.*

Ver. 23. *And they brought forth the He-goats for the Sin-offering, before the King and the Congregation, and they laid their Hands upon them.]* As the Law also directed, *Levit. iv. 14, 15. viii. 22.*

Ver. 24. *And the Priests killed them, and they made Reconciliation with their Blood upon the Altar, to make Atonement for all Israel: for the King commanded that the Burnt-offering, and the Sin-*

Sin-offering should be made for all Israel.] The Burnt-offering, to acknowledge the LORD to be the only God; and the Sin-offering, to make Expiation for all their Offences against his supreme Authority. And they were made not only for Judah, but for all Israel; a great many of the Ten Tribes being now joined to them.

Ver. 25. And he set the Levites in the House of the LORD with Cymbals, with Psalteries, and with Harps, according to the Commandment of David, and of Gad the King's Seer, and Nathan the Prophet: for so was the Commandment of the LORD by his Prophets.] What King David had ordained was approved by the Prophets; who liked the Design, and by Authority from God, settled this Course of Divine Service, 1 Chron. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. 2 Chron. viii. 14. xxiii. 18. The Targum here translates the last Words, For by the WORD of the LORD this Ordinance was made by the Prophets.

Ver. 26. And the Levites stood with the Instruments of David, and the Priests with the Trumpets.] Which were ordained by Moses, Numb. x. 10.

Ver. 27. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the Burnt-offering upon the Altar: and when the Burnt-offering began, the Song of the LORD began also.] When the Drink-offering was poured out, then began the Song; as the Practice is described in After-times, by the Son of Sirach, Eccles. i. 25, 26, &c. See Dr. Lightfoot in his Temple-Service. What the Song of the LORD was, we are told v. 30.

With the Trumpets, and with the Instruments ordained by David King of Israel.] See 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 6. These Hymns and Doxologies were in the Nature of Prayers to God, as Mr. Mede observes, Book ii. Cap. 6. p. 365.

Ver. 28. And all the Congregation worshipped, and the Singers sang, and the Trumpets sounded: and all this continued until the Burnt-offering was finished.] They all adored, as soon as the Sacrifice and the Praises of God began, and continued praising God till all was done.

Ver. 29. And when they had made an End of offering, the King and all that were present with him, bowed themselves and worshipped.] As they began so they concluded the Service, with Adoration of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 30. Moreover, Hezekiah the King, and the Princes,] Who now joined with him, in furthering the Reformation.

Commanded the Levites to sing Praise unto the LORD, with the Words of David, and of Asaph the Seer:] These were the Prophets who composed the Songs, that the Levites sung, as I observed upon 1 Chron. xxv. 6. But the Author of the Psalms ascribed to Asaph, (in the Book of Psalms) seems to be one that lived in After-times; perhaps of the same Family with this famous Asaph, who lived in David's Days, and so called by his Name.

And they sang Praises with Gladness, and they bowed their Heads, and worshipped.] Not only upon this Day, but continually, as David had appointed; and Jehoshaphat in his Reign restored, xx. 19, 20. But this Order had been interrupted in the Time of succeeding idolatrous Princes, especially in the Time of

Abaz; but now revived by this good King Hezekiah.

Ver. 31. Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD,] By offering Sacrifices of Reconciliation with him, whom they had acknowledged to be their LORD; and were a-new entred into their Office.

Come near, and bring Sacrifices, and Thank-offerings into the House of the LORD. And the Congregation brought in Sacrifices and Thank-offerings,] These were Peace-offerings, whereby they acknowledged God's great Goodness to them; and gave him Thanks for this happy Change of Religion.

And as many as were of a free Heart, Burnt-offerings.] These were not like the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, as Kimchi observes, which were in great part eaten by the Offerers: For Burnt-offerings were entirely consumed upon the Altar, in Honour of God; and therefore it argued greater Piety, and Largeness of Heart to offer them.

Ver. 32. And the Number of the Burnt-offerings which the Congregation brought, was three-score and ten Bulls, an hundred Rams, and two hundred Lambs: All these were for a Burnt-offering to the LORD.] These were not so many in Number as had been offered in former Times; for the Nation was now grown poorer, in Comparison to what it was heretofore.

Ver. 33. And the consecrated Things were six hundred Oxen, and three thousand Sheep.] All these were devoted to the Service of God, besides the Burnt-offerings before-mentioned.

Ver. 34. But the Priests were too few,] For they who had sacrificed to Idols were excluded from their Ministry; and they who had not, were not all prepared and sanctified to do their Duty. For it appears by what follows, they were backward unto this Work, to which Hezekiah called them; and therefore could not prepare all the Burnt-offerings (which was their proper Work, Levit. i. 5.) much less all the other Sacrifices, which were numerous.

So that they could not slay all the Burnt-offerings:] This was the Work of the Priests, Levit. i. 6. and could not be done but by those who were skilful in the Business. So Bochartus observes out of the Heathen Poet, that it was practised with great Art and Industry, (Μισύλλοντ' ἐμπαμένως) by those who had Knowledge and Skill to do it dextrously. Hierozoicon, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 33. p. 324.

Wherefore their Brethren the Levites did help them till the Work was ended,] In Cases of great Necessity, they did not stand nicely upon the Observation of the Ceremonial Law. For both now, and in the Days of Josiah, (xxxiv. 11.) some Things were admitted, which that Law did not allow. For as now the Levites slayed the Sacrifices, (which was the Work of Priests alone, Levit. i. 6.) so all the People were allowed to keep the Passover in the second Month; and the Levites offered the Paschal Lambs, which were brought by those that were unclean, and the unclean eat them.

And until the other Priests had sanctified themselves:] Then the Levites might no longer continue to do their proper Work.

For the Levites were more upright in Heart to sanctify themselves, than the Priests.] In the foregoing Reign, as *Jarchi* thinks, such as feared God (that is, would not worship Idols) were forced to conceal themselves, and lie hid: So that when *Hezekiah* came to the Crown, they did not presently appear, nor were they forward to be cleansed and sanctified. But the *Levites* were Men of greater Integrity than the Priests; at least there were more Men of Zeal found among them, that readily offered themselves to the Service of God. See xxx. 17.

Ver. 35. *And also the Burnt-offerings were in Abundance, with the Fat of the Peace-offerings, and the Drink-offerings for every Burnt-offering.]* This is another Reason why the Number of the Priests was not sufficient to discharge the Work of this Day; because there were not only Abundance of Burnt-offerings to be slayed, but the Fat of Peace-offerings to be burnt, and a Drink-offering to attend every Burnt-offering; which must necessarily employ many Hands.

Ver. 36. *And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the People, that God had prepared the People:]* Had given this good Mind to them, to join so forwardly in this Reformation.

For the Thing was done suddenly.] Which argued a divine Motion, whereby they were excited without long Persuasions.

C H A P. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote Letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh,]* I look upon the last Words as signifying, that more particularly he wrote Letters to these two Tribes, as he sent Messengers to the rest; for they were the Tribes nearest to him, whom he could not command, but only invite and admonish them of their Duty: For they were bound by the Law, as well as the People of *Judah*, (see v. 5.) and great Numbers of them had settled themselves in the Land of *Judah*, in the Reign of *Asha*, xv. 9.

That they should come to the House of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover unto the LORD God of Israel.] This was a Festival that used to be celebrated in this very Month wherein he began his Reformation; which he resolved therefore to keep with great Solemnity; and it could be kept no where but at *Jerusalem*, whither he invited the *Israelites* to come: And it seems, *Heshea* King of *Israel*, at this Time did not forbid the Messengers of *Hezekiah* to come and invite them, nor his People to go; as *Jacobus Capellus* observes: Which I cannot but look upon as a remarkable Instance of God's Goodness towards this sinful People in the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, that he raised up, at the very last when they were ripe for Destruction, such a King to reign over them, as had so much Goodness in him, that he did not hinder any of his Subjects who would go and worship at *Jerusalem*. Nor did he prohibit those from coming into his Country, who were sent to invite them to it. So that the *Israelites* could not pretend they were compelled to be Idolaters, for fear of the King's Displeasure.

Ver. 2. *For the King had taken Counsel, and his*

Princes, and all the Congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the Passover in the second Month.] The Time being elapsed, (by such Means as here follow) for its Observation in the first Month, (which was the proper Season) he took Advice with those who were his proper Council in such Matters, to keep it in the next. For by the *Princes and all the Congregation in Jerusalem*, are meant the great Synagogue, consisting of the Senate of that City, and the other Senators called from other Places. So *Grotius* understands it, upon *St. Matthew* x. 17. And thus our *Mr. Thorndike* also, in fewer Words; He means the Consistory, called the *Princes*, as they are called in the Prophet *Jeremiah* xxvi. 10, 11. See *Rights of the Church*, p. 231. For *Jehoshaphat* having settled Judges in every City, it is likely they remained in some Authority till this Time.

Ver. 3. *For they could not keep it at that Time,]* At the Time appointed by the Law, on the fourteenth Day of the first Month; for the Reason here following.

Because the Priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the People gathered themselves together at Jerusalem.] *Abaz* had made such Confusion in the Worship of God, by shutting up the Doors of the Temple, (that no Divine Service might be there performed) and by erecting Idols every where, and many other Ways; that as the Priests by long Disuse could not be sanctified so soon as was necessary, nor the People have time to assemble, so the Temple itself could not be purged till the sixteenth Day of the first Month (xxix. 17.) and consequently the Time was past for keeping the Passover, which was to have been on the fourteenth: They thought it best therefore to adjourn it to the next Month, rather than stay till the next Year; especially since God himself allowed in some Cases, those that could not keep it in the first Month, to keep it in the second, (*Numb.* ix.) and what was allowed to particular Persons, they thought might be allowed to the whole Congregation of *Israel*.

Ver. 4. *And the Thing pleased the King, and all the Congregation.]* The Advice of the Great Council was approved by the King, and by every one else.

Ver. 5. *So they established a Decree,]* This was the Work of a Court, or Great Council.

To make Proclamation throughout all Israel,] By the King's Authority.

From Beer-sheba even to Dan,] From one End of the Country to the other.

That they should come to keep the Passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long Time in such Sort as it was written.] The Ten Tribes had never kept it, since the Division of the Kingdom by *Jeroboam* (at least not in such a Manner as the Law prescribed) being hindered by his threatening Interdicts from going to *Jerusalem*; as their Forefathers were by their long tedious Travels in the Wilderness, *Josh.* v. And as for *Judah*, it appears from v. 26. they had never kept it with such Solemnity, since the Time of *Solomon*.

Ver. 6. *So the Posts went with the Letters from the King and his Princes throughout all Israel and Judah,]* They sent Posts, that timely Notice might

might be given to every one, to prepare themselves for this Service.

And according to the Commandment of the King, saying, Ye Children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the Remnant of you that are escaped out of the Hand of the Kings of Assyria.] That is, Pul and Tiglath Pileser, who had carried a great many of them captive, 2 Kings xv. 29. 1 Chron. v. 26.

Ver. 7. *And be not ye like your Fathers, and like your Brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their Fathers, who therefore gave them up to Desolation, as you see.]* And would certainly give them up also, if they continued to provoke him, as they did.

Ver. 8. *Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your Fathers were,]* It is a Metaphor (as I have observed elsewhere) from refractory Oxen which will not go forward, but withdraw their Necks and their Shoulders from the Yoke, and go backward.

But yield yourselves unto the LORD,] In the Hebrew, *give your Hand;* concerning which Phrase, see 1 Chron. xxix. 24.

And enter into his Sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever:] Come to worship at Jerusalem, which was the only Place appointed by God for his Service, as long as that Law lasted.

And serve the LORD your God, that the Fierceness of his Wrath may turn away from you.] Which otherwise was ready to make an utter End of them; as it had done of their Brethren.

Ver. 9. *For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your Brethren and your Children shall find Compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this Land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his Face from you, if ye return unto him.]* These were the Contents of the Letter, which Hezekiah sent throughout all Israel; concluding with a most exuberant Grace, (as Strigelius justly calls it) which not only promised to them that they should continue in their Land; but they also, who were carried captive, should be restored to them. This, no doubt, Hezekiah had Authority from God to declare to them, that he might move them to Repentance. For Moses had declared this, which Hezekiah applies to them in their Circumstances.

Ver. 10. *So the Posts passed from City to City, through the Country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.]* Being long accustomed to serve other Gods, their Hearts were so hardened, that the Generality of the Ten Tribes scoffed at this most gracious Invitation to Repentance: For which they paid very dearly shortly after, Salmanasser coming six Years after this, and taking Samaria, and carrying the whole Nation captive, 2 Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 10.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless, divers of Asher and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.]* Here is not so much as one of Ephraim mentioned; but in some other Tribes there were those found, who laid to Heart their Apostasy, and came to Jerusalem, humbly begging Pardon. Yet Ephraim is men-

V O L. II.

tioned afterwards as partaking of the Passover, (v. 18.) some of them, it is likely, upon Consideration, following the Example of their Brethren, tho' at first they mocked at the Message.

Ver. 12. *Also in Judah the Hand of God was to give them one Heart, to do the Commandment of the King, and of the Princes,]* There was a marvellous Unanimity in Judah; who were so obedient to the Motions of the Divine Grace, (without which so great a Change could not have been made) as generally to comply with the King's Proclamation, made with the Consent of the Princes.

By the Word of the LORD.] They looked upon it as a divine Command, which was brought to them by that Authority. And it appeared so to be, by the mighty Power of God, which wrought their Hearts to a cheerful Obedience.

Ver. 13. *And there assembled at Jerusalem much People, to keep the Feast of unleavened Bread in the second Month, a very great Congregation.]* This confutes the Fancy of the Talmudists, who say, Hezekiah added a Month to this Year by Interpolation; that is, made another Month Adar, which was the last Month of the Year; and so kept this Passover in the first Month of the next Year. But this is directly contrary to the express Words of this Verse, which says, they kept it in the second Month. Nor is the Opinion of the Karaites truer, who fancy, that tho' they kept the Passover in the second Month, yet they did not keep all the Parts of it, but only offered the Sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb: The Feast of unleavened Bread being performed in the first Month. But this doth not agree with v. 21. which saith expressly, *they kept the Feast of unleavened Bread seven Days.*

Ver. 14. *And they arose, and took away the Altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the Altars for Incense took they away,]* They began as soon as they came to Jerusalem, to shew their Zeal against Idolatry, by throwing down the Altars that Abaz had erected in High-Places, either for Sacrifice, or burning Incense; which were very many. See xxviii. 24.

And cast them into the Brook Kidron.] They stamped them to Powder, I suppose, and then cast it into this Brook.

Ver. 15. *Then they killed the Passover on the fourteenth Day of the second Month: and the Priests and the Levites were ashamed,]* They blushed to see the People so forward, and themselves so negligent.

And sanctified themselves, and brought in the Burnt-offerings into the House of the LORD.] They that had not done it already, (xxix. 34. and v. 3. of this Chapter) now sanctified themselves, that they might perform their Office; there being many Sacrifices to be offered upon this Day. See upon Deut. xvi. 2.

Ver. 16. *And they stood in their Places after their Manner, according to the Law of Moses the Man of God:]* That they might dispatch their Business the more readily.

The Priests sprinkled the Blood, which they received of the Hand of the Levites.] Private Persons, as well as the Levites, might receive the Blood from the Beast, but the Priests alone could sprinkle it.

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Ver.

Ver. 17. *For there were many in the Congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the Charge of the killing of the Passovers,]* The Passover doth not only signify the Paschal Lamb, but all the Sacrifices that accompanied it, as I have shewn in the fore-named Place, Deut. xvi. 2.

For every one that was not clean to sanctify them unto the LORD.] Abundance of the People, that came to keep this Passover, were not clean; and therefore there needed the more Sacrifices to be offered for their cleansing, which was one Reason why the Levites were employed in it, otherwise there had not been a sufficient Number to perform this Duty.

Ver. 18. *For a Multitude of the People, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves,]* And therefore ought not, according to the Law, to have come to the Sanctuary, much less eaten the Passover.

Yet did they eat the Passover otherwise than it was written:] They did not understand, after such a long Night of Ignorance and Superstition, what Ceremonies were required for their cleansing: Or rather, they had not Time to use them. Yet having an eager and pious Desire to commemorate their wonderful Deliverance out of the Egyptian Bondage, they were permitted in their Uncleaness to eat the Passover, lest they should be discouraged, if they were denied it, in their Return to the true Religion.

But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one,] He had a Confidence that God was so gracious, that he would not stand strictly upon the Observation of external Rites, when he saw Mens Hearts honest and upright.

Ver. 19. *That prepareth his Heart to seek God, the LORD God of his Fathers,]* Who with pure and holy Intentions came disposed to worship God, and acknowledge him to be the LORD.

Tho' he be not cleansed according to the Purification of the Sanctuary.] But wanted such ritual Purifications as were required of those that were admitted to worship God at the Sanctuary.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the People.]* Some imagine that God smote them with some Disease, because of their Impurity, which upon his Prayer was cured. But the Scripture uses this Phrase, for granting Pardon, and freeing Men from the Guilt of Sin: As is apparent from Isa. vi. 10. *lest they should be converted, and be healed, i. e. pardoned.*

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem, kept the Feast of unleavened Bread seven Days with great Gladness:]* Which was appointed to be observed after the killing of the Passover. See Exod. xii. 15, 16, &c.

And the Levites and the Priests praised the LORD Day by Day, singing with loud Instruments unto the LORD.] All the seven Days they sang Praises to God with Musick, when the Sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 22. *And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good Knowledge of the LORD:]* He encouraged them to continue

to instruct the People more fully in their Duty, by commending them for their Care and Diligence; and promising, it is likely, to reward them, for what they had done in propagating the true Knowledge of God.

And they did eat throughout the Feast seven Days, offering Peace-offerings, and making Confession to the LORD God of their Fathers.] Acknowledging his great Goodness unto them, which is called confessing, in the holy Language, 1 Chron. xvi. 23, 24.

Ver. 23. *And the whole Assembly took counsel to keep other seven Days:]* They advised, it is likely, with those mentioned, ver. 2.

And they kept other seven Days with Gladness.] They did not observe other seven Days of unleavened Bread; but offered Sacrifices, with Praises and Thanksgivings, and Feasting, seven Days.

Ver. 24. *For Hezekiah King of Judah did give to the Congregation a thousand Bullocks, and seven thousand Sheep; and the Princes gave to the Congregation a thousand Bullocks, and ten thousand Sheep:]* Part of these Sacrifices were offered unto God, and the Priests had another Part, and the rest was distributed to the Multitude, that they might feast and be merry all the seven Days, which was an extraordinary Solemnity; but by this Means not only all the Israelites were provided for who kept this great Feast, but all the Strangers also that came with them to Jerusalem.

And a great Number of the Priests sanctified themselves.] So that there were a sufficient Number to offer the Sacrifices, and to sprinkle the Blood, tho' not to slay them all.

Ver. 25. *And all the Congregation of Judah, with the Priests and the Levites, and all the Congregation that came out of Israel, and the Strangers that came out of the Land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.]* From hence we may conclude, that many Strangers that were in the Kingdom of Israel became Profelytes at this Time, to the true Religion revived in Judah.

Ver. 26. *So there was great Joy in Jerusalem: for since the Time of Solomon the Son of David, King of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem.]* He held a wonderful great Feast for a vast Number of People, fourteen Days, as we read 1 Kings viii. 65.

Ver. 27. *Then the Priests the Levites arose, and blessed the People:]* That is, such of the Levites as were Priests, stood up and dismissed the Congregation with a Blessing: For it was their Office alone to bless, 1 Chron. xxiii. 13. And this Blessing is ordained in the Law of Moses, by a divine Commandment, Numb. vi. 22, 23. and was continued by them as long as the Sanctuary stood. Yea, it was used, if we may believe the Jews, not only in the Temple, but in the Synagogues; not only in the Land of Canaan, but in all Countries where they met to worship God; and they think themselves bound to it by the Divine Law. See Campegius Vitringa, in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, P. ii. L. iii. Cap. 20.

And their Voice was heard, and their Prayer came up to his holy Dwelling-Place, even unto Heaven.] This shews that their Blessing was a Prayer to God to bless them, of which the Blessing ordained

dained by *Moses* is a Proof. And perhaps God at this Time, by some visible Token, testified his Acceptance of them; but it is not likely the Divine Writer would have concealed such a Miracle.

C H A P. XXXI.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when all this was finished,] In the latter End of the second Month, after the Passover, and the following Festivals were over, and they had received good Instructions from the pious *Levites* (xxx. 22.) they now produced the Fruit of all this, by destroying the Monuments of Idolatry.

All Israel that were present, went out to the Cities of Judah, and brake the Images in Pieces, and cut down the Groves, and threw down the high Places, and the Altars] Which *Abaz* had made in all the fenced Cities of Judah, chap. xxviii. 25.

Out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all.] They had no Authority in the Kingdom of Israel, to which Ephraim and Manasseh belonged; but some think that as *Hezekiah* sent Letters to all Israel to come and keep the Passover, so he went by a Divine Motion to those Tribes which were nearest to him, and without the Consent of *Hoshea* King of Israel, destroyed their Images, and other idolatrous Monuments: But these Words may signify no more than that he did this in all Parts of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were fallen off to Judah, and come under his Government, chap. xv. 9.

Then all the Children of Israel returned every Man to his Possession into their own Cities.] This argues great Zeal, that they would not return Home, till they had done all they could to establish and promote true Religion. Of so great Import it is (as *Pellicanus* here observes) to have a good King, and a well instructed People.

Ver. 2. And *Hezekiah* appointed the Courses of the Priests, and the Levites after their Courses, every Man according to his Service,] He restored the Order which *David* had instituted, which had been interrupted since the Days of *Jehoshaphat*, who walked in the Ways of *David*, c. xvii. 3.

The Priests and the Levites for Burnt-offerings, and for Peace-offerings, to minister and to give thanks, and to praise] Not only upon such solemn Feasts as the Passover (which they had lately kept) but every Day they sung praise to God, when the Sacrifices were offered.

In the Gates of the Tents of the LORD.] That is, in the LORD's House, which anciently was a Tent, as he represents to *David*, 2 Sam. vii. 6. And all Houses were called by that Name, Psalm lxxix. 25.

Ver. 3. He appointed also the King's Portion of his Substance, for the Burnt-offerings, to wit, for the Morning and Evening Burnt-offerings, and the Burnt-offerings for the Sabbaths, and for the New Moons, and for the set Feasts, as it is written in the Law of the LORD.] There was a particular Sacrifice, I suppose, offered for the King every Day, at his own Cost and Charge:

Besides which, *Hezekiah* likewise maintained the Morning and Evening Sacrifices every Day, and especially on the Sabbaths, and New Moons, and solemn Feasts; because the Condition of the People was so low, that they could not every one pay the Tax that was laid on them, on Purpose for the Maintenance of these Sacrifices: Yet the First-fruits and the Tenths he ordered to be carefully paid, as it here follows; and these Words, it is possible, may mean no more, but that he made an Allowance out of his own Estate, for the Support of all the Expences ordinary and extraordinary, at the Altar.

Ver. 4. Moreover, he commanded the People that dwelt in Jerusalem,] That by their good Example, others might be stirred up to their Duty.

To give the Portion of the Priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the Law of the LORD.] For the Service of God could not be maintained; unless there was a due Provision made for the Maintenance of his Ministers, who were always supported out of the publick Stock; for they who minister to the Community, ought by the Law of Nature (as *Estius* well observes) to be maintained by it; for their Ministry is not appointed for themselves, but for the Salvation of all the People.

Ver. 5. And as soon as the Commandment came abroad, the Children of Israel brought in Abundance the First-fruits of Corn, Wine, and Oil, and Honey,] The Targum translates the Word, Honey of Dates, as the Jews commonly understand it, and so expound Deut. viii. 8. where seven Sorts of Things are mentioned, of which they brought the First-fruits: But tho' Honey was not offered in Sacrifice to God (which is their Reason why they will not here understand Honey, properly so called) yet I see no Reason why they might not bring the First-fruits of it, and give it to the Priests for their own Use.

And of all the Increase of the Field,] Which *Kimchi* expounds of the Fruits of the rest of the Trees, viz. Fig-trees and Pomegranates.

And all the Tythe of all Things brought they in abundantly.] They paid Tythe, saith he; not only of the Corn, but of the Fruit-trees, and of the Herbs, which were not due by the Law; such Herbs as those mentioned by our Saviour, Mint, Annis, and Cummin, Mat. xxiii. 23. tho' these seem to have been of a later Dater, invented by the Pharisees.

Ver. 6. And concerning the Children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the Cities of Judah,] As many of the Israelites as were under the Power and Dominion of Judah, did the same that they did.

They also brought in the Tythe of Oxen and Sheep,] As the Inhabitants of Jerusalem had brought in the Tythe of such Things as are fore-mentioned, which they had in their Store-houses; so they in the Country brought in also the Tythe of Oxen and Sheep; which were not kept in the Cities.

And the Tythe of holy Things, which were consecrated unto the LORD their God,] That is, saith *Jarchi*, the Tythe which the Levites paid to the Priests: But *Kimchi* takes it for Things consecrated,

consecrated, which they had dedicated to God's Service; of which they also gave Tythe, tho' they were exempted from the Law of the Tything.

And laid them by Heaps.] In a great Abundance, as is before said.

Ver. 7. *In the third Month they began to lay the Foundation of the Heaps, and finished them in the seventh Month.]* They began to offer First-fruits in the third Month, when their Harvest began; and finished the Tything in the seventh Month, when their Harvest was ended, *Exod. xxiii. 16.*

Ver. 8. *And when Hezekiah and the Princes came and saw the Heaps, they blessed the LORD and his People Israel.]* They gave Thanks to God, who had given them such Plenty of good Things, and likewise given them an Heart to offer so plentifully; and they commended the People, and prayed God to increase their Store; for that's the Meaning of blessing the People, praising their Liberality, and praying God to reward it.

Ver. 9. *Then Hezekiah questioned with the Priests and the Levites concerning the Heaps.]* Asking them, as some understand it, what they meant to let them lie so carelessly, as if they were neglected, and did not lay them up in some safe Place; but others think he means, how it came to pass, that there were still such great Heaps left, and no more spent: Which the following Answer seems to favour, tho' the next Words incline to the former.

Ver. 10. *And Azariah the chief Priest of the House of Zadok,]* The Head of the Family of the Priests of the Line of Zadok.

Answered him, and said, Since the People began to bring the Offerings into the House of the LORD,] Which was from the very Beginning of Harvest.

We have had enough to eat, and have left Plenty; for the LORD hath blessed his People, and that which is left is this great Store.] His Meaning seems to be, that they had not spared to make use of the plentiful Provision which was brought to them; and had also laid up as much as they had Room to receive, and all these Heaps were still left.

Ver. 11. *Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare Chambers in the House of the LORD, and they prepared them.]* To build new Store-houses, besides those which Solomon had made; because there was not Room enough wherein to lay all the Offerings and Tythes, and other dedicated Things.

Ver. 12. *And brought in the Offerings, and the Tythes, and the dedicated Things faithfully: Over which Cononiah the Levite was Ruler, and Shimei his Brother was the next.]* As he took Care they should all be faithfully laid up, so he set trusty Persons to see that they were no less faithfully preserved, for their proper Uses: Of which these two Brethren were the Chief.

Ver. 13. *And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nabath, and Asabel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiab, were Overseers under the Hand of Cononiah, and Shimei his Brother,]* These were inferior Officers, under the Command of the two fore-

named Brethren, who had the principal Oversight, and these were Assistants to them.

At the Commandment of Hezekiah the King, and Azariah the Ruler of the House of God.] For so it was ordered by the King, with the Advice of Azariah, who was before-mentioned (ver. 10.) as a chief Person among the Priests.

Ver. 14. *And Kore the Son of Innab the Levite, the Porter toward the East,]* At the Entrance of the House of God.

Was over the Freewill-offerings of God, to distribute the Oblations of the LORD,] Unto the Priests and Levites, to whose Uses they were appropriated by God: Or, as some think, to give out so much Flour, Oil, Wine, Frankincense, &c. as was necessary for the Sacrifices.

And the most holy Things.] So they called the Burnt-offerings, and the Offerings for Sin, and the Trespass-offerings, and the two Lambs for Peace-offerings, on the last Day of the Feast of Tabernacles; as Beckius observes out of *Maimonides*.

Ver. 15. *And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the Cities of the Priests, in their set Office, to give to their Brethren by Courses, as well to the Great as to the Small.]* These were to take Care of those who staid in their Cities, while others came in their Courses to wait at Jerusalem: None of which wanted the Portion allotted to them, both for themselves, and for their little Children.

Ver. 16. *Besides their Genealogy of Males, from three Years old and upward, even unto every one that entred into the House of the LORD, his daily Portion for their Service in their Charges, according to their Courses.]* Tho' none of the Levites were permitted to come into the House of the LORD, to do Service, till they were twenty Years old; yet their Males (as Mr. Selden observes from this Place) who were three Years old or more, were allowed to come into the Temple with their Parents; and in the Distribution, the other Infants being pretermitted, these were provided for. *Kimchi* here observes, that Males under three Years old were not capable of entering into the House of the LORD: But Females neither then, nor after they were older, were capable of this Privilege.

Ver. 17. *Both to the Genealogy of the Priests by the House of their Fathers, and the Levites from twenty Years old and upward, in their Charges by their Courses.]* These Words *twenty Years old* (as the same great Person observes) relate not to the Priests but to the Levites; who, according to the Law of Moses, were not obliged to their Function, till they were thirty Years old, *Num. iv. 3.* But David, in the latter End of his Reign, a little before the Building of the Temple, admitted them to officiate at the Age of twenty Years, *1 Chron. xxiii. 26, 27.* See Selden, *de Successione ad Pontif. Lib. ii. Cap. 4.*

Ver. 18. *And to the Genealogy of all their little Ones, their Wives, and their Sons, and their Daughters, through all the Congregation:]* The fore-named Officers gave to every Family their Portion; not only to the Priests, but to their Wives and Children; of which (it appears by these

these Verſes) an exact Register was kept, according to which they made their Diſtribution.

For in their ſet Office they ſanctify'd themſelves in Holineſs.] Or rather, according to the Hebrew, for *in Faith, or with Fidelity* (ſome tranſlate it in the Margin *in Truſt*) *they ſanctified themſelves in Holineſs*; that is, attended upon their Miniſtry at the Houſe of God, nothing doubting they ſhould be provided of all things neceſſary; for this ſeems to be a Reaſon, why ſuch Care was taken of their Wives and Children, becauſe their Huſbands were wholly given up to the Service of God, and could not follow any other Employment, whereby to provide for the Maintenance of their Families.

Ver. 19. *Alſo of the Sons of Aaron the Priests, which were in the Fields of the Suburbs of their Cities, in every ſeveral City,]* Care was taken of thoſe that lived in the Country; tho' at the greateſt Diſtance, as well as of thoſe that lived in or near *Jeruſalem*, or waited in their Courſes there. They that were not in waiting, but at home with their Families, had Proviſion made for them, as if they had been at the Houſe of God.

The Men that were expreſſed by Name, to give Portions to all the Males among the Priests, and to all that were reckoned by Genealogies among the Levites.] The fore-named Perſons were intruſted with this Buſineſs, to ſee that none wanted a Maintenance.

Ver. 20. *And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God.]* Whatſoever he thought was pleaſing to God, conformable to the Law, and profitable for his People, he performed with Integrity of Heart.

Ver. 21. *And in every Work that he began in the Service of the Houſe of God, and in the Law and in the Commandments, to ſeek his God, he did it with all his Heart, and prospered.]* Whatſoever he went about, either for the Advancement of Religion, or the good Government of his People, he did it ſincerely, and with great Zeal; ſo that God prospered him both in Peace and in War.

C H A P. XXXII.

Ver. 1. **A**FTER theſe Things, and the Eſtabliſhment thereof,] After the Reformation of Religion, and the Eſtabliſhment of it, by ſettling the Maintenance of the *Priests* and *Levites*, (whom he appointed, according to the Ordinance of *David*, to attend in their Courſes) he prospered ſo, that he reſolved to be ſubject no longer to the King of *Aſſyria*; who thereupon came and invaded his Country, 2 *Kings* xviii. 7.

Sennacherib, King of Aſſyria, came and entred into Judah,] This was in the fourteenth Year of the Reign of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 13.

And encamped againſt the fenced Cities,] Many of which he took; God thinking fit to try the Faith of *Hezekiah*, and by diſappointing *Sennacherib*, to get himſelf the greater Glory.

And thought to win them for himſelf.] To conquer the whole Country, even *Jeruſalem* itſelf.

Ver. 2. *And when Hezekiah ſaw, that Sen-*

nacherib was come, and that he was purpoſed to fight againſt Jeruſalem,] His Succeſs puffed him up, ſo that he deſigned, as plainly appeared, to beſiege the capital City of the Kingdom.

Ver. 3. *He took Counſel with his Princes, and his mighty Men,]* Tho' the Prophet *Iſaiah* had aſſured him of God's Protection, he did not neglect to conſult the beſt Means of his Preſervation.

To ſtop the Waters of the Fountains which were without the City:] To fill them up with Earth, that it might not be known there was any Water there; which they turned another Way, and by Pipes and Channels under Ground brought it to *Jeruſalem*.

And they did help him.] Aſſiſted him in this Work.

Ver. 4. *So there was gathered much People together who ſtopt all the Fountains, and the Brook that ran through the miſt of the Land,]* That is *Gibon*, as *Kimchi* underſtands it, which ſome take to be *Kidron*; it was no eaſy Thing to dry up this Brook; but it is ſuppoſed, the Head of it was not far from the City, which being ſtopped up, they diverted the Current; and by Conveyance under Ground, brought it into great Pits within the City; which received the Water for the Uſe of the People. For we read afterward, v. 30. of his ſtopping up a Courſe of Water, which was above, and bringing it down to this Weſt-side of the City.

Saying, Why ſhould the Kings of Aſſyria come and find much Water?] Water was ſcarce in this Country; therefore they thought it prudent to diſtreſs their Enemies by the Want of it. He ſpeaks of *Kings*, in the plural Number, either becauſe there were many Kings that ſerved under the King of *Aſſyria*, or becauſe he was the great King, as he ſtiled himſelf.

Ver. 5. *Alſo he ſtrengthened himſelf, and built up all the Wall that was broken,]* There was a great Breach made in it by *Joſaſh* King of *Iſrael* in the Days of *Amaziah*, chap. xxv. 25. Which, I ſuppoſe, was repaired in his Son's Days, who was a very powerful Prince, chap. xxvi. 9. and therefore he ſpeaks here of ſome other Breach, which had been made ſince that Time; and perhaps in the ſame Place, where thro' Neglect the Wall might poſſibly be fallen down.

And raiſed it up to the Towers,] It was broken down from the Gate of *Ephraim* to the Corner-Gate, (as we read in the fore-named Places) where there were Towers, for the Defence of the Gates, unto which he carried the Wall; ſo that it was intirely raiſed up again.

And another Wall without,] He compaſſed the City with another Wall without the old one, for its ſtronger Defence.

And repaired Millo in the City of David,] Some underſtand by *Millo* the Wall that was about *Sion*, on the North Part of the City: Or the Street within the City from the Palace to the Temple; which he repaired, that is, fortified and made ſtrong with a Wall, to defend the Entrance of it.

And made Darts and Shields in Abundance.] Both offensive and defensive Weapons, of which he took Care there ſhould be no Want.

Ver. 6. *And he set Captains of War over the People, and gathered them together to him in the Street of the Gate of the City,]* In the Street of the principal Gate which was very large.

And spake comfortably to them, saying,] Encouraged them to stand by him, in Defence of their City, Religion, and Liberties, which he assured them God would protect; as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 7. *Be strong, and courageous, be not afraid, nor dismayed for the King of Assyria, nor for all the Multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him.]* It is the Part of a good Commander to shew himself undaunted before his Soldiers; but especially to persuade them, that having a good Cause, God is on their Side; which the Targum in the next Verse explains thus, *The WORD of the LORD our God is our Helper*; which signifies, as Beckius there thinks, more Persons than one in the holy Trinity.

Ver. 8. *With him is an Arm of Flesh, but with us is the LORD our God, to help us, and to fight our Battles. And the People rested themselves upon the Words of Hezekiah King of Judah.]* Relied on what he said, as if it had been spoken to them by God himself.

Ver. 9. *After this did Sennacherib King of Assyria send his Servants to Jerusalem (but he himself laid Siege against Lachish, and all his Power with him) unto Hezekiah King of Judah, and unto all Judah, that were at Jerusalem, saying,]* See 2 Kings xviii. 17, &c. in which Place, and in c. xix. 10, &c. the following Speech is set down more largely, which here is abridged.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith Sennacherib, King of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the Siege of Jerusalem?]* 2 Kings xviii. 19. the last Words seem to signify, that for fear of the King of Assyria, they durst not stir out of the Gates of Jerusalem; for so we translate the last Words in the Margin, *the strong Hold of Jerusalem*.

Ver. 11. *Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over your selves to die by Famine, and by Thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the Hand of the King of Assyria?]* 2 Kings xviii. 22. He did not intend, it appears by this, to storm the City, but to keep them pent up till they were starved.

Ver. 12. *Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high Places, and his Altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one Altar, and burn Incense upon it?]* It is evident from hence, that the Worship of one God alone was known to be the Religion of the Jews; but Sennacherib would have had them believe, Hezekiah had dishonoured him by confining his Worship and Service to one narrow Corner; which was before diffused and spread all over the City and Country; and therefore would not help them. See there, 2 Kings xviii. 22.

Ver. 13. *Know ye not what I and my Fathers have done unto all the People of other Lands? Were the Gods of the Nations of those Lands any Ways able to deliver their Lands out of mine Hand?]* If the LORD had a Mind to help them, he would have them believe that he was not able; because no Gods had been able to deliver those that worshipp'd them, from his Power.

Ver. 14. *Who was there among all the Gods of those Nations, that my Fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his People out of mine Hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine Hand?]* Upon this Argument he enlarges himself very much in 2 Kings xix. 32, 33, 34, 35.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you in this Manner, neither yet believe him: for no God of any Nation or Kingdom was able to deliver his People out of mine Hand, and out of the Hand of my Fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine Hand?]* See 2 Kings xviii. 29, 30.

Ver. 16. *And his Servants spake yet more against the LORD God, and against his Servant Hezekiah.]* The Targum translates it, *They spake perversely against the WORD of the LORD God, &c.* Which plainly declares, that Paraphrast took the WORD of God to be a Divine Person, whose Servant Hezekiah was.

Ver. 17. *He wrote also Letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying,]* One of these Letters is set down at large in 2 Kings xix. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

As the Gods of the Nations of other Lands have not delivered their People out of mine Hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his People out of mine Hand.] He insists upon this so often and so long, it being the most popular Argument he could use.

Ver. 18. *Then they cried with a loud Voice in the Jews Speech, unto the People of Jerusalem, that were on the Wall, to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the City.]* By a Surrender of it into their Hand. See 2 Kings xviii. 26, 27, &c.

Ver. 19. *And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the Gods of the People of the Earth, which were the Work of the Hands of Man.]* They ignorantly fancied, there was no Difference between the God of the Universe, whom the Jews worshipped, and the Gods of particular Countries, who pretended to no Power but only there; though in Truth they had no Power at all, being made by those that worshipped them.

Ver. 20. *And for this Cause Hezekiah the King, and the Prophet Isaiah, the Son of Amos, prayed, and cried to Heaven.]* See 2 Kings xix. 1, 2, &c. 25, 26, &c.

Ver. 21. *And the LORD sent an Angel, which cut off all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Assyria:]* With a vast Number of common Soldiers, as we read 2 Kings xix. 35. The Hebrew Text no where mentions the Name of the Angel, nor the Time of the Year when this Stroke was given, nor the Kind of Plague whereby they were destroyed; but the Targum saith, the WORD of the LORD sent Gabriel to do this Execution, who in the Passover Night smote them with Lightning; which is related in the Babylonian Talmud, after the same Manner; as Beckius observes upon the Targum.

One would think, that Artabanus had read or heard something of this sudden and dreadful Overthrow, when he dissuaded Xerxes from invading Greece, being swoln with Confidence that nothing could withstand him. *Doest thou not*

not observe, faith he, how the highest and magnificent Buildings are wont to be struck with Thunder, when the lower escape? Φιλέει γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέκοντα πάντα κολῆει, For God loves to depress all Things that are lifted up. And a little after, in the same Speech, he admonishes him; 'Οὐ γὰρ ἔα φρονέειν ἄλλον μέγα ὁ Θεὸς ἢ ἑαυτὸν, For God doth not allow any other to think highly of themselves, but only himself. Herodotus, Lib. vii. Cap. 10.

So he returned with Shame of Face to his own Land. And when he was come into the House of his God, they that came forth of his own Bowels, slew him there with the Sword.] See 2 Kings xix. 37. And with him the Assyrian Empire began to fall, and never recovered its former Strength; tho' it still continued in great Power. For the next Year after Sennacherib's Death, the Medes revolted; being encouraged to it, no doubt, by this great Defeat at Jerusalem: And by their Example several other Nations fell off from the Assyrians, and asserted their Liberty; as Hermannus Conringius hath observed out of Herodotus, in his *Adversaria Chronologica*, Cap. iv. But still their Monarchy continued, as appears by what follows in the next Chapter of this Book.

Ver. 22. Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem from the Hand of Sennacherib the King of Assyria, and from the Hand of all other, and guided them on every Side.] That is, defended them from all their Enemies; just as a Shepherd doth his Sheep, whom he leads into Places of Safety.

Ver. 23. And many brought Gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and Presents to Hezekiah King of Judah:] His Neighbours were so far from molesting him, that many came to worship God, and to do Honour to Hezekiah, who was so highly in God's Favour.

So that he was magnified in the Sight of all Nations from thenceforth.] That is, all the neighbouring Countries, who heard of these Things, had him in great Esteem.

Ver. 24. In those Days Hezekiah was sick to the Death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a Sign.] Or, as it is in the Margin, wrought a Miracle for him. See a large Account of this in the twentieth Chapter of the second Book of the Kings, and my Annotations there: Unto which this may be added, that Pliny faith, The Application of a very fat Fig to an hard Swelling, is a present Remedy. *Carbunculi, si sine Ulcere est, quàm pinguißimum ficum imponi pene singulare remedium est*, Lib. xxiii. *Nat. Histor.* Cap. 7. But the Schechin, wherewith Hezekiah laboured, (which we translate Boil) was not of this Sort; for the Word signifies the worst Kind of Ulcers: And therefore there was nothing in this Application of a Lump of Figs to lessen the Wonder.

Ver. 25. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the Benefit done unto him:] In his Deliverance from so powerful an Enemy, as he could not resist, and from such a dangerous Disease, as was incurable, without the special Hand of God.

For his Heart was lifted up:] By the Embassy sent to him from the King of Babylon, who

came to enquire of the Wonder done in the Land: Which, together with the Slaughter of Sennacherib's Army, his shameful Retreat, the Presents which had been sent him from other Countries, and the Fame which he had got, made him have too high an Opinion, tho' not of his Power, which was very small; yet of his Piety, which was very great. But instead of making him thankful, he grew so presumptuous of God's Favour, as to be forgetful of his Benefits.

Therefore there was Wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.] Who, it seems, were as insensible as himself of the Mercies they had received; contenting themselves, that they were not Idolaters, tho' they were not truly pious, and mindful of God's Benefits.

Ver. 26. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the Pride of his Heart.] Upon the Admonition which the Prophet Isaiah gave him; and the severe Sentence he pronounced against him, and his Family.

(Both he and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem)] Who were awakened by the same Threatning.

So that the Wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the Days of Hezekiah.] But Peace and Truth was in his Days, as he speaks, 2 Kings xx. 19.

Ver. 27. And Hezekiah had exceeding much Riches and Honour: and he made himself Treasuries for Silver, and for Gold, and for precious Stones, and for Spices, and for Shields, and for all Manner of pleasant Jewels:] All which he shewed to the King of Babylon's Ambassadors, 2 Kings xx. 13.

Ver. 28. Store-houses also for the Increase of Corn, and Wine, and Oil; and Stalls for all manner of Beasts, and Cotes for Flocks.] In the Hebrew the Words are, for Beast and Beast; that is, every Beast: as in Esther ix. 21. Year and Year; that is, every Year: and v. 28. Generation and Generation, i. e. every Generation.

Ver. 29. Moreover, he provided him Cities, and Possessions of Flocks, and Herds in Abundance: for God had given him Substance very much.] The great Riches of these Countries consisted in Abundance of Cattle, of all Sorts, as I have oft observed.

Ver. 30. This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper Water-Course of Gibon,] He seems to speak of the same Thing which is mentioned before, v. 4. being a Work of such great Labour and Art, that Ezra thought fit to make it memorable, by taking a more particular Notice of it, among his great Works. From the mention of the upper Water-Course, Kimchi gathers, there were several Streams of this Torrent.

And brought it straight down to the West-side of the City of David.] The Rivulet, I suppose, had many Windings before, and did not come straight down to the City, as now it was made to do.

And Hezekiah prospered in all his Works.] It is likely, he contrived many other Things for the Benefit of the City of Jerusalem; none of which miscarried.

Ver. 31. Howbeit, in the Business of the Embassadors of the Princes of Babylon, who sent unto him

him to enquire of the Wonder that was done in the Land,] Which is mentioned at large, 2 Kings xx. 10, 11. *Isaiah* xxxviii. 7, 8. In the former of which Places I have endeavoured to give an Account of it. But *Bochartus*, I find, strongly opposes the Opinion of the Body of the Sun's going back: In his *Canaan*, Lib. i. Cap. xiv. p. 4. where he observes, that the Scripture in both Places speaks of the Shadow's going back ten Degrees; and then it is said, the Sun went back, that is, the Shadow of the Sun, or the Light of the Sun, which succeeded to the going back of the Shadow. And it must be confessed, that if the Sun had gone back, it would not have been a Miracle in *Judea* alone, but all the World over: And the King of *Babylon* needed not have sent to enquire about the Wonder in that Land, because it would have been a Wonder in his Land, and in all Lands, as well as in *Judea*. And so it was, for I have observed there out of *Herodotus*, that in *Egypt* they knew something of the unusual Motion of the Sun: And perhaps they now observed it in *Babylon*, and only sent to enquire whether *Isaiah* foretold it, which was a great Wonder. I have met also with one, who thinks, that the *Babylonians* being Worshipers of the Sun, it was Part of *Hezekiah's* Sin, that he did not take this Occasion to persuade the Ambassadors to worship God, who made and commanded the Sun; and could stop the Course of it when he pleased.

God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his Heart.] God suffered him to behave himself according to his own Inclinations, without any special Motion from him; that *Hezekiah* might know, he was not so strong as he imagined, if he were left to himself without God. But it is generally thought, the last Words relate rather to God, who made Proof of him, as he had done of many other good Men, whether he would entirely obey him, or not. He tries none in that Sense, of which *St. James* speaks, viz. for an ill Intent, or to lead Men to Destruction; but for a good End, to improve them, and bring them to Salvation. Thus he tempted *Abraham*, *Gen.* xxii. 1. and the Children of *Israel*, *Exod.* xv. 25. xvi. 5. and *Ezekiel*, and many others, that it might appear, how they stood affected to him: Which God, no doubt, knew, and now saw the Pride and Vanity that lurked in *Hezekiah's* Heart; which was hid from every one but God himself, who now suffered him to discover it for his Humiliation. For it was a greater Crime to be again puffed up, as he had been before his dangerous Sicknefs.

Ver. 32. Now the rest of the Acts of *Hezekiah*, and his Goodness, behold, they are written in the Vision of *Isaiah* the Prophet, the Son of *Amoz*,] Who hath recorded his Prayer, which he made to God in his Sicknefs.

And in the Book of the Kings of *Judah* and *Israel*.] See xxvii. 7.

Ver. 33. And *Hezekiah* slept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the Sepulchres of the Sons of *David*:] Which was a Part of that Honour which they did him, mentioned in the next Words; for he deserved it above all the Kings which they had since the Time of *David*,

And all *Judah* and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* did him Honour at his Death:] Buried him, perhaps, with such Solemnity and Expences as were made at the Funeral of King *Asa*, c. xvi. 14. *Maimonides* saith, they appointed a Company of Students in the Law to sit at his Sepulchre, and to mourn seven Days together. See *Schikcard* in his *Jus Regium*, p. 173. But this I look upon as merely *Rabbinical*.

And *Manasseh* his Son reigned in his Stead.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *Manasseh* was twelve Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five Years in *Jerusalem*:] See 2 Kings, c. xxi. 1. where his Mother's Name is set down, which is here omitted.

Ver. 2. But did that which was Evil in the Sight of the LORD, like unto the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the Children of *Israel*.] The very same Words are in the fore-named Place, ver. 2. And here it follows ver. 9. that he did worse than those abominable Heathen; not only committing all the Sins of his Forefathers, but endeavouring to exceed them, and leave nothing undone wholly to subvert the Worship of God.

Ver. 3. For he built again the High-Places which *Hezekiah* his Father had broken down, and he reared up Altars for *Baalim*,] Imitated *Ahab* King of *Israel*, as it is explained there, 2 Kings xxi. 3.

And made Groves, and worshipped all the Host of Heaven, and served them.] These Groves, I suppose, were made about the Temple, which was utterly forbidden, *Deut.* xvi. 21. being an Heathenish Rite, (*Judges* vi. 25.) and mentioned by *Isaiah* (lxvi. 17.) among the abominable Idolatries which they practised secretly in their Gardens. Yet the *Jews* in After-times did plant Trees about their *Proseuchæ*, their Oratories, or Places of Prayer, as *Scaliger* observes in his *Fragmenta*, at the End of his Book *De Emend. Temporum*, p. 25. But they were not in the Law touching the Temple.

Ver. 4. Also he built Altars in the House of the LORD,] In the Court of the Priests. See 2 Kings xxi. 4.

Whereof the LORD had said, In *Jerusalem* shall my Name be for ever.] This was the greater Profanation, because God had chosen this Place to settle his Presence in it.

Ver. 5. And he built Altars for all the Host of Heaven, in the two Courts of the House of the LORD.] In the Court of the People of *Israel*, and in the Court of the Gentiles. See there ver. 5.

Ver. 6. And he caused his Children to pass thro' the Fire in the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*:] There is mention made only of his Son in the Book of the Kings, but here of his Children, whom he consecrated to *Moloch*.

Also he observed Times, and used Enchantments, and used Witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar Spirit, and with Wizards: he wrought much Evil in the Sight of the LORD to provoke him to Anger.] He seems to have studied to find out what God had forbidden in his Law, that he might practise it. See there, 1 Kings xxi. 6.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And he set a carved Image (the Idol which he had made) in the House of God, of which God had said to David, and to Solomon his Son; In this House, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the Tribes of Israel, will I put my Name for ever.]* This Verse and the next are the same with 2 Kings xxi. 7, 8. where see my Annotations. I shall only add here, That this seems to have been an Image of more than ordinary note, which he set up with a great Deal of Ceremony. For among the Heathens, whom he imitated, Images did not become Gods, that is, were not made Objects of Worship, till being placed in the most holy Part of their Temples, there they were consecrated by being anointed and crowned, by Sacrifices, Prayers and Adorations; and then setting up Candles burning before them: All which was concluded with a Festival, which sometimes was made anniversary. Many plain Instances there are of this, particularly in *Minutius Felix*, who mentions the Unction, Coronation, Adoration, and Prayers, whereby they were consecrated.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I any more remove the Foot of Israel from out of the Land which I have appointed for your Fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole Law, and the Statutes and the Ordinances by the Hand of Moses.*

Ver. 9. *So Manasseh made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the Heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the Children of Israel.]* A most prodigious Change, from the Height of Piety in his Father's Time, into the Sink of Impiety in this. Which strange Vicissitude of Things should admonish us not to be secure, as *Victorinus Strigelius* notes; who being Professor of Theology at Heidelberg, left this Remark in his Lectures on this Place, near an hundred and forty Years ago. Now we have the Word of God abundantly, in all Wisdom; and pious Princes patronize both those that preach, and those that learn the Gospel. But this Plenty of the Word, we now enjoy (I tremble to speak it, but I must speak it, because it will come to pass) shall be taken away: And that sad mournful Time will come, when the publick Assemblies of the Church shall be scattered, and a few pious Souls shall meet with Fear in a Corner, to communicate among themselves the Fragments of the heavenly Doctrine, and give God thanks for those Reminders: Which we have seen fulfilled in that Country, and in France, and other Places.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD spake to Manasseh and to his People:]* By his Servants the Prophets. See ver. 18. The Jews say in *Seder Olam Rabba*, cap. xx. that *Joel*, *Nabum*, and *Habakuk* prophesied in his Time; but he was so wicked that they would not so much as mention his Name in the Beginning of their Prophecies; which is not a good Reason.

But they would not hearken.] Neither he nor his People regarded what they said.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the Captains of the Host of the King of Assyria,]* The Royal Family failing in Babylon, the King of Assyria (*Esarhaddon*) brought that Kingdom under his Yoke again, and held it

thirteen Years, as *Primate Usher* observes in his *Annals*. And he hearing, from the Ambassadors of *Merodach Baladan*, what great Treasures were in Jerusalem, and that *Hezekiah* was dead, and *Manasseh* had forsaken that God who did such great Things for his Father, sent an Army against him, which he could not withstand.

Which took Manasseh among the Thorns,] In a Thicket where he had hid himself, but was discovered.

And bound him with Fetters,] With Iron Chains fastened to his Wrists, or to his Legs, as we understand it.

And carried him to Babylon.] Which the King of Assyria, it is likely, had made his Seat, to secure his late Conquests. This was in the twenty second Year of his Reign, as the Jews compute in *Seder Olam Rabba*, cap. xxiv. when they carried away with him the Idol in Dan, according to *Judges* xviii. 30. But however that be, it is very evident the Assyrian Monarchy was not fallen by the Defection of the Medes and other Nations, which I before mention'd, but still continued in great Power; Babylon itself, which rebelled at the same Time with the Medes, being again subdued to its Obedience, as appears by their sending *Manasseh* bound hither. So that they had not only *Cælo-Syria* and *Phœnicia*, but *Mesopotamia* and *Chaldea* under their Dominion, as *Conringius* observes, in the Book before named, upon the fore-going Chapter, ver. 21. How long their Power continued the Scripture doth not tell us; but *Manasseh* after his Return from his Captivity, seems to have been a free Prince, subject unto none, maintaining Forces in all his fenced Cities, ver. 14. of this Chapter.

Ver. 12. *And when he was in Affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers,]* This was three and thirty Years before his Death, as the Jews make Account, in the Book before mentioned. But both *Kimchi* and *Abarbanel* confess that this relies upon a weak Foundation, as doth the other Thing, that he was carried away in the twenty second Year of his Reign.

Ver. 13. *And prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, and heard his Supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his Kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.]* So true it is that *Vexatio dat Intellectum*, Trouble and Vexation give Understanding, and make Men know God and themselves. Which is not universally true, for some are far from being brought to a right Sense by their Miseries; as *Abaz*, this King's Grand-father, was never without some sore Affliction or other, and yet never relented. But tho' *R. Jobadan* was so charitable as to think that *Manasseh* had his Part in the other World, yet the Doctors in the Title *Sanhedrin* (Cap. xi. Sect. 1.) exclude him from any Portion in it, and say he was only restored to his Kingdom, but not to Life eternal. For this is the Doctrine they there lay down, There were three Kings, and four private Men, who have no Portion in eternal Life: The three Kings are *Jeroboam*, *Abab*, and *Manasseh*; the four private Men, *Balaam*, *Doeg*, *Ahitophel*, and

Gebazi.

Gebazi. But they have no Ground for this Sentence pronounced upon *Manasseh*, but the Wickedness of his Successor; from whence they argue the Father's Repentance was not sincere: The Folly of which sufficiently appears from this History of him and his Father *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 14. *Now after this, he built a Wall without the City of David, on the West-side of Gihon, in the Valley, even to the entering in at the Fish-gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great Height, and put Captains of War in all the fenced Cities of Judah.]* He provided for the Safety of his Kingdom, and in the first Place built a Wall for the Defence of *Jerusalem*; which some think was that which his Father made (*c. xxxii. 5.*) which he repaired and strengthened, after it had been thrown down, perhaps by the King of *Assyria's* Forces, when they carried him captive. The *Fish-gate* was the Gate where they sold Fish (as the *Targum* expounds it) which was brought from *Joppa*. Concerning *Ophel*, see *xxvii. 3.*

Ver. 15. *And he took away the strange Gods, and the Idol out of the House of the LORD, and all the Altars that he had built in the Mount of the House of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the City.]* He had profaned the House of the LORD, but had not shut up the Doors, as *Abaz* did; and therefore he is said only to have purged it from Idols, but not to have opened it, as *Jacobus Capellus* observes. Here particular Notice is taken of the Idol mentioned *ver. 7.* which confirms what I have noted there.

Ver. 16. *And he repaired the Altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon Peace-offerings and Thank-offerings,]* For now he was sensible there was no other God but the LORD, who had wonderfully delivered him out of Captivity, and restored him to his Kingdom, when he implored his Mercy.

And commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.] This was a Proof of his true Repentance, that he endeavoured to bring his People back to the Service of God, whom he had misled (*ver. 9.*) to the Worship of Idols. But as *Kimchi* notes, he was not able to do so much good as he had done mischief, for the People continued their Inclination to Idolatry, and neglected the Study of the Law of God. For in *Josiah's* Reign (which presently followed) it was Matter of great Surprise that they found the Book of the Law, when they were repairing the Temple; the Copies of it, as the *Jews* think, having been destroyed in the Time of *Manasseh* and *Amon*. But it is not credible which were preserved in the Hands of the Ten Tribes, and without which the Church could not have been reform'd.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, the People did sacrifice still in the High-Places, yet unto the LORD their God only.]* This was an Error so rooted, that very good Kings could not correct it, such as *Asa* and *Jehoshaphat*; in whose Days the People worshipped the true God, but in an unlawful Place, as they now did.

Ver. 18. *Now the rest of the Acts of Manasseh, and his Prayer unto his God, and the Words of the Seers that spake to him, in the Name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written*

in the Book of the Kings of Israel.] So *Judah* is now called, who with *Benjamin*, were all that were left of the Children of *Jacob*, who was named *Israel*. But these Books here mention'd are not those which we now have, but others that were lost in the Captivity.

Ver. 19. *His Prayer also, and how God was entreated of him,]* He mentions his Prayer again; because, I suppose, he made more than one. As if he had said, *how he continued to pray till God was entreated of him:*

And all his Sin, and his Trespas, and the Places wherein he built High-Places, and set up Groves and graven Images, before he was humbled:] This is one of the Places which plainly prove (as I have often noted) that *Ascherim* (which we translate *Groves*) signifies not the Groves themselves, but the Images or Statues which were set up in them. For Groves are *planted*, not *set up* or erected, as it is here said of *Manasseh*, that *he set up Groves*; that is, dedicated and consecrated, as that Word signifies among Greek and Roman Writers. See *xxxiv. 1. 2 Kings xiv. 23. Jerem. xvii. 2.*

Behold, they are written among the Sayings of the Seers.] Or, of *Hosai*, (as we translate it in the Margin) who was a Prophet, it is likely, in those Times, by whom many memorable Things in his Reign were recorded; particularly his Prayer, which he recorded, as *Isaiab* did the Prayer of *Hezekiah* his Father.

Ver. 20. *So Manasseh slept with his Fathers, and they buried him in his own House: and Amon his Son reigned in his Stead.]* See *2 Kings xxi. 18.* It is likely he left it in his last Will, that he would be buried privately, as not worthy to lie by his Ancestors.

Ver. 21. *Amon was two and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned two Years in Jerusalem.]* As the Sons of *Jeroboam*, and of *Baasha*, and of *Ahab*, reigned two Years and no longer.

Ver. 22. *But he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his Father: for Amon sacrificed to all the carved Images which Manasseh his Father had made, and served them.]* See *2 Kings xxi. 20, 21.*

Ver. 23. *And humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his Father had humbled himself;]* He followed him in his Sin, but not in his Repentance.

But Amon trespassed more and more.] Some of the *Jews* say, that he burnt the Book of the Law: Others, that he lay with his own Mother. But the great Sin which the holy Scriptures charge him with, is his Idolatry, which he more and more introduced, and never repented of it.

Ver. 24. *And his Servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own House.*

Ver. 25. *But the People of the Land slew all them that had conspired against King Amon, and the People of the Land made Josiah his Son King in his Stead.]* These two Verses are the very same with those *2 Kings xxi. 23, 24.* See there.

C H A P. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. **J**osiah was eight Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty Years.

Ver.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, and walked in the Ways of David his Father, and declined neither to the right Hand nor to the left.]* These two Verses are the same with 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2. only there the Name of his Mother is set down, which here is omitted.

Ver. 3. *For in the eighth Year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his Father:]* He gave very early Proofs of his pious Inclinations; for when he was but sixteen Years old, and had newly taken on him the Administration of Affairs, he began to worship God publickly, and propounded David to himself for his Pattern.

And in the twelfth Year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high Places, and the Groves, and the carved Images, and the molten Images.] When he was twenty Years old, he begun to bring others to the true Religion, by reforming Abuses in the Worship of God: For now he had got more Authority, and therefore destroyed idolatrous Worship, which he was inclined to do before, and had it in his Mind when he was a mere Youth. This is not so distinctly noted in the Book of the Kings, where nothing is recorded of him till what he did in the eighteenth Year of his Reign. And this is the more remarkable, because he began the Reformation here spoken of, before Jeremiah begun to prophesy, which was not till the next Year, in the thirteenth of King Josiah. See Jerem. i. 2.

Ver. 4. *And they brake down the Altar of Baalim in his Presence;]* I have elsewhere observed that Baalim were Demi-Gods, as Mr. Mede truly calls them.

And the Images that were on high above them he cut down,] The Hebrew Word Chamamim, which we translate Images, as most think, hath some Relation to the Sun; because it comes from a Word that signifies Heat. And Aben-Ezra translates it, Houses made for the Worship of the Sun. The LXX sometimes translate it, εἰδωλα, sometimes βδελύγματα, but do not tell us what Idols and Abominations these were. Jo. Geusius thinks it was the Idol called Thammuz, by which Name Osiris, Jupiter Ammon, or the Sun was understood: And indeed the Worship of all the Host of Heaven is mentioned together with the Worship of Baalim, in the Idolatry which Manasseh committed, chap. xxxiii. 3.

And the Groves, and the carved Images, and the molten Images he brake in Pieces,] Here again Ascherim signifies the Idols in the Groves; for the Groves themselves were not broke in Pieces, but cut down.

And made Dust of them, and strowed it upon the Graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.] To declare his Detestation of the smallest Remains of them.

Ver. 5. *And he burnt the Bones of the Priests upon their Altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.]* Whereby he polluted these Altars, and made them abominable, and purged the Nation from their Idolatry, which was very great; for it is likely these were not Levitical Priests, but Priests made by their idolatrous Kings, either of other Nations, or such as they could draw in of their own Nation (after the Manner

of Jeroboam) to officiate to their strange Gods.

Ver. 6. *And so did he in the Cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali,]* Tho' Salmanassar had carried away the main Body of the ten Tribes from their own Land, yet there remained a great many of the poor People behind, as appears from this Place, and from ver. 9, 33.

With their Mattocks round about.] Some translate it Mauls, others Forks, or such like Instruments.

Ver. 7. *And when he had broken down the Altars and the Groves, and had beaten the graven Images into Powder, and cut down all the Idols throughout all the Land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.]* For it appears by the Book of the Kings more fully, that he went himself in Person thro' the whole Country to see this Work done, which otherwise might have been performed negligently.

Ver. 8. *Now in the eighteenth Year of his Reign,]* When he was twenty six Years old he proceeded further, having disposed the People to offer freely toward the Reparation of the House of God, as it here follows.

When he had purged the Land and the House,] That is, the House of God.

He sent Shaphan the Son of Azaliab, and Maaseiah the Governor of the City, and Joab the Son of Joabaz the Recorder, to repair the House of the LORD his God.] Here is a more perfect Narrative of the Reparation of the Temple than was given in the Book of the Kings, where only Shaphan is mentioned, as sent to Hilkiab; but here two other Men of great Authority are joined with him, and ordered to see the Work set forward.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to Hilkiab the High Priest, they delivered the Money that was brought into the House of God, which the Levites that kept the Doors had gathered of the Hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the Remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin, and they returned to Jerusalem.]* These last Words import, that these Levites (having received what was given at the Door of the Tabernacle which they kept) travelled all the Country over, to collect what Money they could gather from well disposed People, who contributed to this Work; which Money the three fore-named Persons received from them when they returned to Jerusalem: And besides this, Shaphan alone seems to have been sent to Hilkiab, to sum up the Money that had been offered at the Temple for this Use, 2 Kings xxii. 4.

Ver. 10. *And they put it in the Hand of the Workmen, that had the Oversight of the House of the LORD,]* Who were appointed to take Care of the Work, and to see it done.

And they gave it to the Workmen that wrought in the House of the LORD, to repair and mend the House.] The Overseers gave it to the Artificers mentioned in the next Verse, who were to buy Materials, and employ them in the Reparation.

Ver. 11. *Even to the Artificers and Builders gave they it, to buy hewn Stone and Timber for Couplings, and to floor the Houses which the Kings of Judah had destroyed.]* It seems both the Outside and Inside, the Floor and the Roof, were run to Ruin by long Neglect, since the Days of Joash, when the Temple was last repaired:

Which

Which the *Jews* (in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxiv.) make account was two hundred and eighteen Years.

Ver. 12. *And the Men did the Work faithfully:]* So that no Account was taken of them.

And the Overseers of them were Jahath, and Obadiah the Levites, of the Sons of Merari; and Zechariah, and Mesbullam, of the Sons of the Kohathites, to set it forward; and other of the Levites, all that could skill of Instruments of Musick.] That is, all those were well skilled in Musick, and performed their Part in the Service of the Temple; which is here mentioned to signify that the principal Levites were set over this Work, to see it well done.

Ver. 13. *Also they were over the Bearers of Burdens, and were Overseers of all that wrought the Work in any manner of Service:]* There being great Numbers of them, they might well inspect every Person that was employed in this Work.

And of the Levites there were Scribes, and Officers, and Porters.] These Overseers were deputed to several Employments; for which none so fit as the Levites, who understood all manner of Things belonging to the House of God, being to do constant Service there.

Ver. 14. *And when they brought out the Money that was brought into the House of the LORD,]* And thereupon had begun the Reparation of the House.

Hilkiab the Priest found a Book of the Law of the LORD given by Moses.] The Word given is not in the Hebrew: Which must be applied not to the Book, but to the Law of the LORD given by Moses. For we cannot certainly from hence conclude, that this was the very authentic Book, which Moses laid up by the Ark. See 2 Kings xxii. 8. because in the Hebrew it is said the Book of the Law of the LORD by the Hand of Moses: Which doth not signify, the Book was written by his own Hand, but that the Law therein contained was delivered to the People by the Ministry of Moses: So the Phrase, *by the Hand*; is used in very many Places, *Exod. xxxv. 29. Levit. x. 11. xxvi. 45. Numb. iv. 37, 45, &c.* See 2 Kings xviii. 8. and in this Book, xxxv. 6.

Ver. 15. *And Hilkiab answered and said to Shaphan the Scribe, I have found the Book of the Law in the House of the LORD. And Hilkiab delivered the Book to Shaphan.]* Who read it, 2 Kings xxii. 9.

Ver. 16. *And Shaphan carried the Book to the King, and brought the King word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy Servants, they do it.]* When he came to give an Account to the King, how he had executed his Command, (v. 8, 9, &c.) he delivered the Book to him.

Ver. 17. *And they have gathered together the Money that was found in the House of the LORD, and have delivered it into the Hand of the Overseers, and to the Hand of the Workmen.]* See 2 Kings xxii. 9.

Ver. 18. *Then Shaphan the Scribe told the King, saying, Hilkiab the Priest hath given me a Book. And Shaphan read it before the King.*

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, when the King had heard the Words of the Law, that he rent his Clothes.]* These two Verses are Word for Word in 2 Kings xxii. 10, 11. where I have explained them. I shall only here add, That *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, the reading of the Law, on every

Sabbath and Festival, (which was divided for that Purpose, into several Sections) was as old as the Time of *Joshua*; but was neglected in the Reign of wicked Kings, particularly in that of *Abaz*. If it were again restored by *Hezekiah*, (which is uncertain) it was again abolished by *Manasseh*; and perhaps not renewed when he repented; howsoever, discontinued again by *Amon*: So that both Priests and People omitting the reading of the Law, both publickly and privately, (for the publick Omission caused a private Neglect) no Wonder, that upon finding the Book of the Law, and hearing it read, they were startled at it, as if one were risen from the Dead. *Historia sacra & exotica, ad Annum Mundi 3372.*

Ver. 20. *And the King commanded Hilkiab, and Abikam, the Son of Shaphan, and Abdon, the Son of Micah, and Shaphan the Scribe, and Asaiab, a Servant of the King's, saying,]* He that is called here *Abdon*, is in 2 Kings xxii. 12. called *Achbor*; otherwise there is no Difference between this Verse and that.

Ver. 21. *Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel, and in Judah, concerning the Words of the Book that is found: for great is the Wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our Fathers have not kept the Word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this Book.*

Ver. 22. *And Hilkiab, and they that the King had appointed, went to Huldah the Prophetess, the Wife of Shallum, the Son of Tikvath, the Son of Hasrah, Keeper of the Ward-robe (now she dwelt in Jerusalem, in the College) and they spake to her to that Effect.*

Ver. 23. *And she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the Man that sent you to me,*

Ver. 24. *Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring Evil upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants thereof, even all the Curses that are written in the Book which they have read before the King of Judah:*

Ver. 25. *Because they have forsaken me, and have burned Incense unto other Gods, that they might provoke me to Anger with all the Works of their Hands; therefore my Wrath shall be poured out upon this Place, and shall not be quenched.*

Ver. 26. *And as for the King of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, concerning the Words which thou hast heard,*

Ver. 27. *Because thine Heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his Words against this Place, and against the Inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy Clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD.*

Ver. 28. *Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace, neither shall thine Eyes see all the Evil that I will bring upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants of the same. So they brought the King Word again.*

There is little Difference in the Words between these Verses, and 2 Kings xxii. 14, 15, &c. and none in the Sense: He that is called there *Harbas*, is here called *Hasrah*, (some pronouncing his Name one Way, and some another.) And the *Targum* translate those Words, v. 27.

Thou didst humble thyself before God, &c. in this Manner: Thou didst humble thyself before the WORD of the LORD, when thou didst hear his Words against this Place; which plainly suppose the WORD to be a Divine Person, who spake to Moses, and gave him the Law.

Ver. 29. *Then the King sent and gathered together all the Elders of Judah and Jerusalem.]* See 2 Kings xxiii. 1.

Ver. 30. *And the King went up into the House of the LORD, and all the Men of Judah, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the Priests and the Levites,]* In 2 Kings xxiii. 2. it is said, the Priests and the Prophets went up: The Levites are omitted there, as the Prophets are omitted here; but both make up a compleat Narrative of the Persons that went up to the House of the LORD; for among the Priests and Levites there were some Prophets, such as *Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and others.*

And all the People, Great and Small: and he read in their Ears all the Words of the Book of the Covenant, that was found in the House of the LORD.] One cannot think that *Josiah*, and all the Nation, were wholly Strangers to the Words contained in this Book, (tho' perhaps they seldom had read it) who considers, that *Jeremiah* and other Prophets were now living, who were very conversant in this Book, and instructed the People out of it; but they did not sufficiently attend to the Words of it, and therefore *Josiah* gathered a solemn Assembly on Purpose, that they might hear it read, and he moved to observe that which most affected him: But it is not to be supposed, that the whole Book was all read at one Time, but by Parcels at several Times, that they might consider and weigh it: Especially that Passage in *Deut. xxviii. 38.* where *Moses* foretold the Captivity of *Samaria*, and afterwards of *Judah* and their King; which *Kimchi* thinks, *Hilkiah* might bid *Shaphan* take special notice of and read it to the King; which, (if it be true) no Doubt, he remarked to the People, that, if it were possible, they might be brought to Repentance, and prevent the great Calamities, which were threatned to them.

Ver. 31. *And the King stood in his Place, and made a Covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his Commandments, and his Testimonies, and his Statutes, with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, to perform the Words of the Covenant which are written in this Book.]* See 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

Ver. 32. *And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the Inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers.]* He did not compel them, but they offered themselves freely, upon his Persuasion, to renew their Covenant with God; and promised to be firm to it: Which, perhaps, at that Time they really resolved, tho' they soon revolted.

Ver. 33. *And Josiah took away all the Abominations out of all the Countries that pertained to the Children of Israel,]* This is more largely related in 2 Kings xxiii. 4, 5, 6. and the following Verses.

And made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God.] He

persuaded them to perform all Acts of religious Worship unto God, and unto none else.

And all his Days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their Fathers.] But tho' he suppressed all external Idolatry, yet in their Hearts they strongly inclined to it, and often practised it; as appears from *Jer. iii. 10. xxv. 3, 4, &c.*

C H A P. XXXV.

Ver. 1. **M**oreover, *Josiah kept a Passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem:]* This was in the eighteenth Year of his Reign, immediately after he had made a glorious Reformation, by abolishing all Idolatry: And accordingly it is related next to that in 2 Kings xxiii. 21, 22, 23. but very briefly, as the other is very largely.

And they killed the Passover on the fourteenth Day of the first Month.] At the Time prescribed by the Law, *Exod. xii. 6.* For there was no Need, it seems, to adjourn it till the second Month, as they did in the Days of *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 2. *And he set the Priests in their Charges, and encouraged them to the Service of the House of the LORD,]* To do their Duty in their several Places, so that nothing might be omitted, which was requir'd to be done at this great Festival.

Ver. 3. *And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel which were holy unto the LORD,]* That is, the Levites were holy unto the LORD; and therefore may be rendered, *and were holy, &c. i. e.* peculiarly dedicated to this Service of ministering to the Priests, and instructing the People.

Put the holy Ark in the House, which Solomon the Son of David, King of Israel, did build;] *Jarchi* thinks, that *Manasseh*, or his Son *Amon*, had removed the Ark from its Place, as other enormous Things had been done by such wicked Kings, 2 Kings xvi. 14. and xxviii. 24. of this Book, which may give a more probable Sense of those Words, xxxiii. 23. that *Amon* trespassed more and more, than that which some of the Jews mention: For it was a great Addition to his Sin, if he displaced the Ark. Other Jews indeed interpret it after another Manner, and make a Fable out of these Words, as *Const. L'Empereur* observes upon *Codex Middoth*, pag. 97. and *Dr. Lightfoot*, of the Temple, pag. 91. But nothing is more natural than to think, that *Hilkiah* himself had removed the Ark, while the Temple was repairing, there being Defects in the most holy Place as well as other Parts of it: And it was not fit to let the Ark be exposed to the Workmen. Yet *Jacobus Capellus* thinks it better to say the Word *Tenu* ought not to be translated, *put*, but *keep*, or *look after* the Ark in the House which *Solomon* built: For now, that they were eased of carrying it on their Shoulders, they ought to employ themselves more carefully in all other Offices about it; *ad Annum Mundi 3374.*

It shall not be a Burden upon your Shoulders:] That is, hereafter; for they were to carry it to a settled Place, there to remain; and then they would be obliged no further to bear it on their Shoulders.

Shoulders, as they had done before it was fixed in the Temple.

Serve now the LORD your God, and his People Israel,] Serve God in Singing, and Playing upon Instruments, when the Sacrifices of God's People are offered, and you shall be excused from your former Burdens.

Ver. 4. *And prepare yourselves by the Houses of your Fathers, after your Courses, according to the Writing of David, King of Israel,]* See 1 Chron. xxiii. and xxiv. and the following Chapters.

And according to the Writing of Solomon his Son.] See 2 Chron. viii. 14.

Ver. 5. *And stand in the holy Place]* In the Court of the Priests, where they were wont to stand, when they ministered unto God.

According to the Divisions of the Families of the Fathers of your Brethren the People,] Who were to bring for every Family a Lamb, as Moses commanded, *Exod. xii. 3.*

And after the Division of the Families of the Levites.] Who were appointed to kill the Lamb for them.

Ver. 6. *So kill the Passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your Brethren,]* That they might be capable to eat of it.

That they may do according to the Word of the LORD, by the Hand of Moses.] Who commanded it to be eaten in one House, *Exod. xii. 46.* He seems to require, that as the rest of the Tribes came according to their Families, into which they were divided; so the Levites would give them a good Example, and come according to their Families.

Ver. 7. *And Jofiah gave to the People of the Flock, Lambs and Kids,]* For the Lamb might be taken either from the Sheep, or from the Goats, *Exod. xii. 5.*

All for the Passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the Number of thirty thousand,] That the People might be at no Charge; at least thirty thousand Families were provided for at the King's Charge.

And three thousand-Bullocks: these were of the King's Substance.] These Bullocks were for Offerings upon the seven Days of unleavened Bread, which followed the Passover.

Ver. 8. *And his Princes gave willingly unto the People, to the Priests, and to the Levites:]* As Jofiah provided Paschal Lambs for the People, so some great Men provided not only for them, but for the Priests and the Levites; that they also might offer without Charge.

Hilkiab, and Zechariah, and Jehiel,] It appears by these Words, that the Princes here mentioned, were not Rulers of the People, but the Chief of the Priests: For Hilkiab was the High-Priest; and the other two were the Heads of the two great Families of the Priests, Eleazar and Ithamar; who are called the Captains of the Host, as I observed upon 1 Chron. xxv. 1. See my Annotations there. This is a little more largely and distinctly expressed by Bertram, in his *Republica Judaica*, Cap. xv. where he saith, Zechariah was the Chief among the second Priests of the Race of Eleazar, who was properly called Nagid, the Captain of the Temple; as Jehiel was the most illustrious Person among the second Priests, who were the Progeny of Itha-

mar, and was properly called Pakid; and was set over the Gershonites and Merarites, as Zechariah was over the Kohathites.

Rulers of the House of God,] Who were the same with those who in the *New Testament* are called the *σεβητοι* of the Temple; who governed the rest of the Priests. So Bertam, *de Republica Judaica*, p. 296, 300.

Gave unto the Priests for the Passover-offerings, two thousand and six hundred small Cattle,] That is, Lambs and Kids.

And three hundred Oxen.] That through the whole Festival they might be able to rejoice with their Brethren.

Ver. 9. *Conaniah also, and Shemaiah, and Ne-thaneel, his Brethren, and Hashabiah, and Jehiel, and Jozabad, Chief of the Levites,]* Who were Men of Estates, as well as in great Offices among their Brethren.

Gave unto the Levites for Passover-offerings, five thousand small Cattle, and five hundred Oxen.] That they might be provided for, as well as the Priests, to make it a Time of universal Joy.

Ver. 10. *So the Service was prepared, and the Priests stood in their Place, and the Levites in their Courses, according to the King's Commandment.]* All Things were disposed for the offering the Paschal Sacrifice; the Priests standing in their Place, and the Levites attending them.

Ver. 11. *And they killed the Passover,]* That is, the Levites killed the Lamb, and gave the Blood to the Priests.

And the Priests sprinkled the Blood from their Hands,] For they alone could perform this Part of the Service.

And the Levites flayed them.] That the Priests might have nothing to do, but to sprinkle the Blood of every one of them; which took up a great deal of Time. See xxix. 34.

Ver. 12. *And they removed the Burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the Divisions of the Families of the People, to offer unto the LORD, as it is written in the Book of Moses:]* It seems, some of the Lambs were given by Jofiah for Burnt-offerings; and these they dispatched as fast as they could, that they might give the Paschal Lamb to every Family according to their Divisions, after it had been offered to the LORD: For this was the principal Offering upon this Day.

And so they did with the Oxen.] All of which were not given for Peace-offerings, but some for Burnt-offerings; which they also offered as fast as they could, that they might not hinder the Paschal Lamb from being offered.

Ver. 13. *And they roasted the Passover with Fire, according to the Ordinance:]* See Exodus xii. 8, 9.

But the other holy Offerings sod they in Pots, and in Caldrons, and in Pans,] Tho' the Paschal Lamb was to be roasted; yet the other Eucharistical Sacrifices, which attended it, (as the Targum expounds it) might be boiled in Water.

And divided them speedily among all the People.] Gave every one of the People a Portion of the Oxen, that were offered for Peace-offerings; and did it so speedily, that they had Time

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Time to take Care of themselves, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And afterwards they made ready for themselves, and for the Priests: Because the Priests the Sons of Aaron were busied in offering Burnt-offerings and the Fat until Night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the Priests the Sons of Aaron.]* This is a great Instance of the Zeal and Diligence of the Priests, for whom the principal Persons among them had made a large Provision; but they did not eat of the Paschal Lamb, nor of the Peace-offerings till Night, being employed in offering Burnt-sacrifices, and burning the Fat till that Time; against which the Levites prepared for them and for themselves.

Ver. 15. *And the Singers the Sons of Asaph were in their Place, according to the Commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the King's Seer; and the Porters waited at every Gate, they might not depart from their Service, for their Brethren the Levites prepared for them.]* This seems to import, that the Singing and Musick continued till all the Sacrifices were offered, that is, till Night; and none were suffered to depart from the Service, the Porters standing at every Gate to hinder them, if they attempted it. And their Brethren, who were not Singers, took Care to provide for them their Portion, when they had done.

Ver. 16. *So all the Service of the LORD was prepared the same Day to keep the Passover, and to offer Burnt-offerings upon the Altar of the LORD, according to the Commandment of King Josiah.*

Ver. 17. *And the Children of Israel that were present, kept the Passover at that Time, and the Feast of unleavened Bread seven Days.]* These two Verses are a summary Account of what went before, that the whole Solemnity was performed in every Part of it, according to the King's Direction.

Ver. 18. *And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the Days of Samuel the Prophet,]* We do not read in the Book of Samuel of any Passover kept in his Days; therefore the Book wherein this was recorded is lost, as many other Books of the Prophets are.

Neither did all the Kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the Priests and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem.] The last Clause shews wherein his Passover went beyond all other. David and Solomon were greater Kings than he, and in several Respects kept greater Festivals; the Number of People, while the Ten Tribes were united to the other two, being greater, and the Multitude of Sacrifices also greater; but in this Josiah excelled them all, that being nothing so rich, he was notwithstanding so liberal, as to provide all the Sacrifices for the Priests, the Levites, and the People, at this Feast.

Ver. 19. *In the eighteenth Year of the Reign of Josiah was this Passover kept.]* In the same Year wherein he repaired the House of God, and the Book of the Law was found and brought to him; which, it is likely, put him in mind of this Duty, *ch. xxxiv. 8.*

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Ver. 20. *After all this, when Josiah had prepared the Temple,]* Some time after the Temple was repaired, and made fit for the Service of God, and they expected great Happiness to ensue such pious Works, there was an unexpected Change: Which is here noted, to teach us not to be confident, nor rashly enterprize any thing, remembering the Vicissitude of all earthly Things.

Necho King of Egypt] Whom the Targum calls Pharaoh the lame, and so Kimchi, who saith he was lame in his Feet, and thence called by the Name of Claudus, as the Romans would have expressed it; who, from the like Disposition of their Bodies, gave Names to their Emperors; such as Crassus, Barbarosa, and others, as Beckius observes. This Lameness proceeded from some Wound he had received, for Necho signifies wounded.

Came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates:] The City Carcassum stood upon that River, and belonged to the Assyrians, with whose King Necho came to fight, *2 Kings xxiii. 29.*

And Josiah went out against him.] See what I have noted there; unto which I shall here add, that by this it seems probable Josiah was in Friendship with the King of Assyria, to whose Assistance he seems to have voluntarily gone with his Forces, by giving a Diversion to the Egyptians. Certain it is, the Assyrian Empire was not yet fallen, for in Josiah's Days the Prophet Zephaniah foretels the Destruction of Nineveh, *ch. ii. 13, &c.* Now Josiah reigned in the Time of Cyaxarus King of the Medes, by whom Nineveh was destroyed, as Herodotus tells us. But it was then in a flourishing Condition, for Phraortis, the Predecessor of Cyaxarus, not contented with the Kingdom of the Medes, but invading the Assyrians, after he had subdued the Persians, was defeated, and lost a vast Army before Nineveh: Which Hermannus Conringius thinks might possibly move Josiah to court the King of Assyria's Favour, by opposing himself to the King of Egypt, when he came to invade him. But a most judicious Person in this Kind of Learning (whom I have oft consulted) thinks this all wrong; and that tho' Nineveh was not yet destroyed, yet the Empire was, in the eighteenth Year of Josiah; from which some Governor got some little Part, and kept Nineveh till it was destroyed by Nabopolassar, in the first Year of his Reign. Therefore I should have said Josiah was a Friend of the King of Babylon, rather than of the King of Assyria. But I must leave those that are better skilled than I am in these Matters to judge of them.

Ver. 21. *But he sent Embassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee thou King of Judah? I come not against thee this Day, but against the House wherewith I have War:]* He had no Controversy with him, and therefore prays him not to meddle in this War.

For God commanded me to make haste:] And therefore desires him not to give him any Stop in his Expedition. Some think he only pretended this, because he knew Josiah had a great Reverence to God, and in Obedience to him,

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might desist from his Purpose : And the *Targum*, with some of the *Jews*, think he calls his own Idol by the Name of God ; tho' *Kimchi* thinks he speaks of the true God, who perhaps admonished him in a Dream, as he did *Abimelech*, or sent him such a Message by the Prophet *Jeremiah* (as *Grotius* supposes) many of whose Prophecies are directed to foreign Nations. Or, perhaps he meant, that he felt a strong Impulse unto this Undertaking, which he took to be from God.

Forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.] Of which there was great Danger, if he opposed the divine Command.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless Josiab would not turn his Face from him, but disguised himself that he might fight with him,*] And not be known to be the King of *Judah*.

And hearkened not unto the Words of Necho from the Mouth of God,] The *Targum* thinks that *Josiab* regarded not what *Necho* said, because he thought he spake only from his Idol, for he could not imagine that the God of *Israel* had spoken to him. But these Words import the contrary, and therefore *Josiab* should at least have enquired of God, whether it was his Mind that he should not oppose *Necho*.

And came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo.] A Place in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh. xvii. 11*. So that *Josiab* may seem to have come against him, because he passed thro' his Country without his Leave : But I rather think, as I said before, he was in the Interests of the King of *Assyria*. I observ'd upon 2 *Kings xxiii. 29*. that *Herodotus* tells the same Story, but mistakes the Name of *Megiddo*, and calls it *Magdolin* ; which was a great City in *Egypt*, better known to him than the Cities in *Syria* or *Phœnicia*. He also adds, that after this Battle the King of *Egypt* took the great City in *Syria* called *Cadytus* ; which *Herm. Conringius* thinks was the Name of *Jerusalem* among the old *Egyptians* : *Adversaria Chronolog. Cap. xv*. I think *Jacobus Capellus* hath well observed (in his *Hist. sacra & exotica*) that the *Egyptians* being a vain People, concealed from *Herodotus*, when he came to consult the Affairs of their Country, many Things that were true, and imposed upon his Belief many Things that were false. For Example, they did not tell him a Word of the Victory which *Nebuchadnezzar* got over *Pharaoh Necho* at *Euphrates* ; but gloried in this Victory over the *Syrians* ; *ad A. Mundi 3425*.

Ver. 23. *And the Archers shot at King Josiab ; and the King said to his Servants, have me away, for I am sore wounded.*] His Disguise did not secure him ; for still he appeared, I suppose, as a great Commander, at whom the Enemy would sooner aim than at common Men.

Ver. 24. *His Servants therefore took him out of that Chariot, and put him in the second Chariot that he had ;*] As all great Captains have led Horses, that if one fail they may mount another (which was the Custom in Wars in ancient Time, as *Bochart* shews in his *Hieroz. P. i. Cap. 2 & 9*.) so when they fought in Chariots they had an empty one following them, into which they might go if the other proved unserviceable or inconvenient.

And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the Sepulchres of his Fathers : And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiab.] After the Example of the Prophet *Jeremiah* : For as bad as they shewed themselves afterward to be, they had some Sense of the great Worth of this Prince.

Ver. 25. *And Jeremiah lamented for Josiab, and all the singing Men and singing Women spake of Josiab in their Lamentations to this Day,*] Whensoever they bewailed any Calamity, they mentioned that as the greatest that had befallen them.

And made them an Ordinance in Israel :] That they should never forget this fatal Stroke, after which they never saw good Days. This Statute was made by the supreme Authority, and was approved by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who joined in this Lamentation ; which warrants Christian Kings and Princes to appoint Days for the yearly Commemoration of great Calamities, or great Deliverances.

And behold they are written in the Lamentations.] *Josephus*, in his tenth Book of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, Chap. vi. imagines the Book of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, which now remains in the Bible, contains the mournful Ditties sung at *Josiab's* Funeral, and in After-times ; which Opinion *S. Hierom* follows ; at least in those Words, *Lament. iv. 20*. *R. Solomon* thinks *Josiab* was bewailed ; but it is manifest all this is a Mistake, for that Book was written after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which is lamented in it, and the Words now mentioned plainly relate to *Zedekiah*, not to *Josiab* ; who was not taken but killed. Therefore the *Lamentations* here mentioned are lost, which were written immediately after *Josiab* was slain.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of the Acts of Josiab, and his Goodness, &c.*] That is, his Piety, or (as we translate it in the Margin) his Kindnesses, that is, his great Love to his People, of which there are great Instances in the foregoing Part of this History.

According to that which was written in the Law of the LORD,] Which he made his Rule in all that he did.

Ver. 27. *And his Deeds first and last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.*] It seems the *Israelites*, who were left in the Land of *Samaria*, continued to keep Records of what was done in the Land of *Judah* itself.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN the People of the Land took *Jeboahaz* the Son of *Josiab*, and made him King in his Father's stead in *Jerusalem*.] Not by Right of Succession, but by a Faction of the People.

Ver. 2. *Jeboahaz was twenty and three Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three Months in Jerusalem.*] See 2 *Kings xxiii. 30, 31*.

Ver. 3. *And the King of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the Land in an hundred Talents of Silver, and a Talent of Gold.*] He heard, it is possible, that he meditated Revenge for the Death of his Father, and therefore deposed him ; and also set a great Fine upon

upon the People who joined with him. See 2 Kings xxiii. 33.

Ver. 4. *And the King of Egypt made Eliakim his Brother King over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his Name to Jehoiakim.*] As a Mark he was made King by him, and owed his Dignity to his Favour. So Pharaoh changed the Name of Joseph; and Nebuchadnezzar, the Names of Daniel and his three Companions.

And Necho took Jehoabaz his Brother, and carried him to Egypt.] See 2 Kings xxii. 24.

Ver. 5. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven Years in Jerusalem: And he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD his God.*] See 2 Kings xxiii. 36, 37.

Ver. 6. *Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon.*] The first Words, *against him*, are emphatical; for when he came up before, he did not come up properly against Jerusalem, but against Pharaoh Necho; and therefore it is said, not that he came up against that City, but merely that he came up into the Land, Jerem. xxxv. 11. when he made Jehoiakim his Servant three Years. So that this Coming up had no other Effect but to make him tributary to Nebuchadnezzar.

And bound him in Fetters to carry him to Babylon.] See 2 Kings xxiv. 1, &c. The Targum expounds it, he put brazen Chains upon his Hands and Fetters upon his Legs. But he did not carry him to Babylon, for Nebuchadnezzar altered his Mind, and permitted him to reign at Jerusalem as his Tributary; tho' he carried away, as it follows, some of the Vessels of the Temple, and also certain choice Persons, as we read in the first of Daniel.

Ver. 7. *Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the Vessels of the House of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his Temple at Babylon.*] He carried away a great many in the next King's Reign (2 Kings xxiv. 13, 14.) but it seems he begun to do it in this. And they were so hardened, as to believe those false Prophets, who assured them these Vessels should shortly be brought again from Babylon, and give no Credit to Jeremiah, who told them they prophesied a Lie: For these Vessels should be so far from being brought from Babylon, that all the remaining Vessels should be carried after them, and there be till the Day when God visited them. See Jerem. xxvii. 16, 17, 21, 22.

Ver. 8. *Now the rest of the Acts of Jehoiakim, and his Abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.*] There was a Book, it is likely, that had this Title; but what was said there to be found of him, is not here mentioned. The Targum saith, the Iniquity that was found in him. But what was that Iniquity? To this they answer in the Talmud, that he had the Name of an Idol in his Forehead: Or, as others say, there were found in his Body certain Marks and Impressions in Honour of Idols. So St. Hierom, He had made those Marks in his Body, which God had forbidden in Levit. xix. 28. See our learned Dr. Spencer, L. ii. De Leg. & Ritibus Hebr. Cap. xiv. Sect. 2. But there are those that think it

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is meant of the innocent Blood that he shed, 2 Kings xxiv. 4. But that was the Sin of Manasseh; therefore the plainest Meaning is, that he was found guilty of disloyal Intentions against the King of Babylon, which he concealed a great while, but at last they were discovered, 2 Kings xxiv. 1.

And Jehoiachin his Son reigned in his stead.

Ver. 9. *Jehoiachin was eight Years old when he began to reign.*] In 2 Kings xxiv. 8. it is said, that he was eighteen Years old when he began to reign. See my Annotations on that Place: Unto which may be added, that Abarbinel thinks there is no Difference between these two Places; but that the Word for eight is governed by another that is wanting, signifying ten. But the common Solution is, that when his Father had reigned one Year, he made his Son joint Sovereign with him, that the People might be settled in their Affection to him, before he left the Throne; which was ten Years after. So long he reigned with his Father, and eight Years alone, which made eighteen Years in all. See Buxtorf in his Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis, Pars ii. Cap. 2. p. 408. But there are those who take the Meaning to be, that he was eight Years old, when he (that is, his Father) began to reign: Or, as our Primate Usher thinks, it was the eighth Year, not of his Age, but of the Captivity of Babylon, to which some principal Persons were obnoxious; Chronologia Sacra, pag. ult. But some great Men think here is an Error of the Copist, for he was eighteen Years old.

And he reigned three Months and ten Days in Jerusalem, and he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD.] It seems Nebuchadnezzar repented of his making him King; being afraid, as Kimchi thinks, that by the evil Counsel of his Courtiers, he would be persuaded to rebel, after the Example of Jehoiakim. Jacobus Capellus thinks the People set him up to be their King, and therefore he resolved to dethrone him, sending his Servants against him, and then coming himself, and taking Jerusalem. See 2 Kings xxiv. 10, 11.

Ver. 10. *And when the Year was expired, King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly Vessels of the House of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his Brother King over Judah and Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiv. 11, 12. For God had threatened none of Jehoiakim's Seed should sit upon the Throne of David. They might be set upon his Throne, as the same Capellus observes, but not remain or continue possessed of it. Sedere enim dicuntur, non transitoria, sed quæ aliquamdiu pedem figunt, ad A. M. 3399.

Ver. 11. *Zedekiah was one and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven Years in Jerusalem.*] See 2 Kings xxiv. 18.

Ver. 12. *And he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the Prophet, speaking from the Mouth of the LORD.*] From the Mouth of the WORD of the LORD, saith the Targum: Which shews, that by the WORD here he meant a divine Person. It is a wonderful Thing, that having seen so many of the

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People carried away captive, together with their King *Jehoiakim*, they should not at all relent; but go on in those Ways which had led others to Destruction. But so incorrigible were this People, that *Ezekiel* tells us, they who were carried away captive (among whom he was one) persisted in their Rebellion, and were not at all amended. His whole Book is full of Complaints of their Impenitence. And in the *thirteenth* Chapter he tells us, they still entertained false Prophets, (unto whom they hearkened rather than to *Ezekiel*) who saw Visions of Peace for *Jerusalem*, when there was no Peace; as he there speaks, *v. 16.* that is, made the People believe, *Jerusalem* should not be taken; and so hardened their Hearts in their obstinate Wickedness.

Ver. 13. *And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who made him swear by God:]* That he would be true and faithful to him.

But he stiffened his Neck, and hardened his Heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.] His Wickedness was so great, that God gave him up to commit this further Crime of Perjury, to his utter Ruin, *2 Kings xxiv. 20.*

Ver. 14. *Moreover, all the chief of the Priests and the People transgressed very much, after all the Abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the House of the LORD, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.]* There was such an universal Corruption and that to such an abominable Height, that there was no Hope of their growing better, they being perfectly ripe for utter Destruction.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising up betimes, and sending;]* To rise betimes signifies in Scripture to do a Thing with Care, Diligence and Affection: For good Husbands, especially Fathers of Families (from whom this Expression is borrowed) were wont to get up early to look after their Business, and to quicken and encourage their Servants to their Duty. Such was the Compassion and Care of God for his People, that he gave them seasonable, timely and early Admonitions to their Duty, and Notice of their Danger, before it was too late.

Because he had Compassion on his People, and on his Dwelling-place:] To this Compassion they owed a Succession of Prophets in every King's Reign, as I have before noted; who most earnestly called upon them to reform. Yet, if they did in a good King's Reign grow something better, they immediately revolted as soon as he was dead, and a bad one came in his Place. Such a strange Propension they had to Idolatry! Which is the more wonderful, when we consider, that this Nation, which was so prone to Idolatry, when they had so many Prophets among them to admonish them against it, were not at all inclined to it, when they had no more any Prophets to instruct them, nor any Miracles wrought among them; that is, after their Return from the Captivity of *Babylon*, when Prophecy in a little Time ceased; and yet they were steadfast in the Service of God, according to the Law of *Moses*. The best Account that I am able to give of this, is, that before the Captivity sufficient Care was not taken for the building of Synagogues for the Teaching of the

Law, if there were any at all; for we find no Mention of them in these Books; whereas they abounded in every Place after the Captivity; inasmuch that the *Jews* say, there were several hundreds in *Jerusalem* alone, wherein the Law was read and taught; which was a most powerful Means to keep them constant to the Religion they professed; for, as *Josephus* reports, by this Means the People came to be so acquainted with their Laws, that if any Person asked any of them concerning them, ῥᾶον ἂν εἶποι πάντα, ἢ τὸ νομα τῷ ἑαυτῷ, *He would more readily tell every Thing, than his own Name.*

Ver. 16. *But they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets,]* As the Corruption was universal, so they were incorrigible; not only rejecting, but despising, and setting at nought the Means of their Cure.

Until the Wrath of the LORD rose against his People, till there was no Remedy.] Till the implacable Wrath of God came upon them; there being no Hope they would repent, and be healed; but they must die and perish.

Ver. 17. *Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, who slew their young Men with the Sword in the House of their Sanctuary,]* Unto which, it is likely, they fled for Safety, after the Manner of all Nations, who took their holy Places to be inviolable; but they found no Protection there, the *Chaldees* being a rough Nation, and having no Regard to them.

And had no Compassion upon young Man, or Maiden, old Man, or him that stooped for Age: he gave them all into his Hand.] To kill them, or sell them for Slaves, as he thought good.

Ver. 18. *And all the Vessels of the House of God, great and small,]* Which are numbred in the next Book, *Ezra i. 9, 10, 11.*

And the Treasures of the House of the LORD, and the Treasures of the King, and of his Princes; all these he brought to Babylon.] The former Treasures, by a special Providence of God, were preserved, and restored in the Reign of *Cyrus* to the House of the LORD; but the other, it is likely, were look'd upon as Spoil, and spent by the King and his great Men.

Ver. 19. *And they burnt the House of God, and brake down the Wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the Palaces thereof with Fire, and destroyed all the goodly Vessels thereof.]* *2 Kings xxv. 9, 10.* But it is a very absurd Supposition of some, who think, that all the sacred Books were now also burnt, and restored again by *Ezra* after the Captivity, out of his Memory. For who can believe, that among all the Priests and Prophets too, that were carried captive, none of them should take Care to carry a Bible with them? *Jeremiah* also remaining in the Land, we may be confident was not without it. It is plain also, that *Daniel* had his Prophecy, and the Book of *Moses*, in *Babylon*, *Dan. ix. 2, 3.* And *Josephus* says, that *Cyrus* was shewn the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, wherein his Name was expressly mentioned; which shews, they had Copies of these Books in their Captivity. But this extravagant Fable was brought upon the Stage by the Apocryphal *Esdras*, *Chap. xiv.* and was not known till the Beginning of the third

third Century, when that Author, half Jew half Christian, lived.

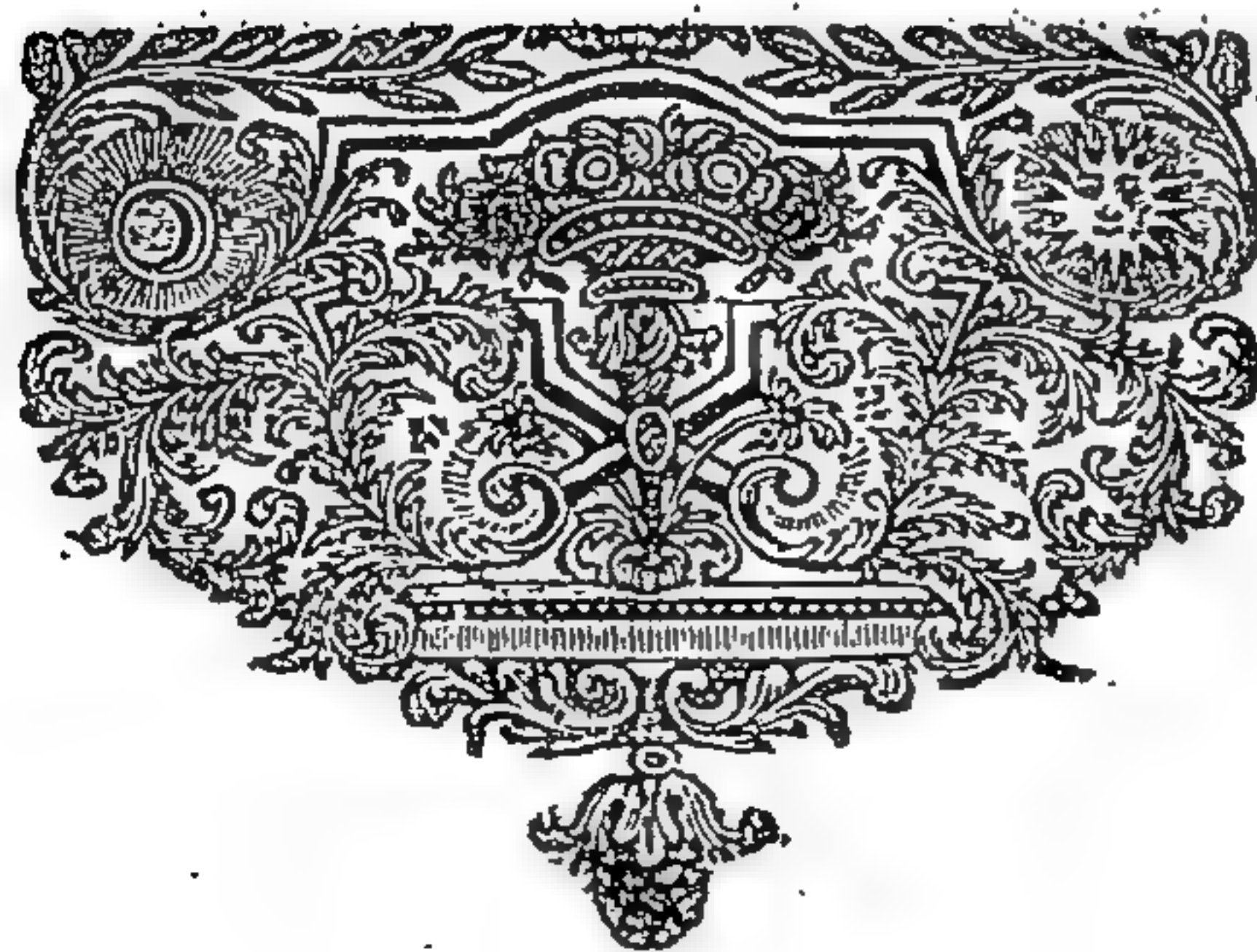
Ver. 20. *And them that had escaped from the Sword, carried he away to Babylon; where they were Servants to him and his Sons, until the Reign of the Kingdom of Persia.*] Which gave them Liberty to return to their Country. Such was the Law of War in ancient Times; all the People of a City or Country that were conquered, became Slaves to the Conqueror; and appertained to the publick or private Persons, who had taken them, according to the Laws settled in every Nation for the Dividend of the Booty. Thus we find at the Sacking of Troy, all that remained alive, were made Slaves, even Queen *Hecuba*, and her Daughters. The Greek and Roman History are full of such Examples.

Ver. 21. *To fulfil the Word of the LORD by the Mouth of Jeremiah, until the Land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath,*] Because the Jews, among other Precepts, had violated that of letting their Land rest from ploughing and sowing every seventh Year, God gave their Land a long Sabbath, or Rest, for no less than ten times seven Years; which *Jeremiah* threatened, *ch. xxv. 9, 12. & xxix. 10.* If it be true, that they had neglected this Law for the Space of four hundred and thirty Years; but had ploughed their Ground, &c. in the seventh, as well as in all other Years; then the Judgment of God upon them was very remarkable, in making their Ground rest and be free from Tillage, just as long as it should have been, if they had observed his Law: For in the Space of four hundred and thirty Years, there ought to have been sixty and five Years of Rest and Intermission. See *Gulielmus Vorstius* upon *David Ganz* his *Tzemuch David*, p. 212.

To fulfil threescore and ten Years.] These Years ended in the first or second Year of *Cyrus*; but when they began is variously disputed. *Hermannus Witsius* hath lately argued strongly, that it was in the fourth Year of *Jeboiakim*: For then *Jeremiah* said, *The whole Land shall be a Desolation, and these Nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy Years, ch. xxv. 11.* which is further explained, *v. 17, 18.* Which is the Opinion also of *Hermannus Conringius* in his *Adversaria Chronologica*, Cap. xiv. and of *Johannes Vorstius* in his *Exercitatio secunda de Captivitate Babylonica*. And thus our *Usher*, *ad A. Mundi* 3394. Tho' other great Men date these LXX Years from the Captivity of *Zedekiah*. See *Scaliger de Emend. Temporum*, Lib. vi. p. 575.

Ver. 22. *Now in the first Year of Cyrus King of Persia, (that the Word of the LORD, spoken by the Mouth of Jeremiah, might be accomplished,) the LORD stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus, King of Persia, that he made a Proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and put it also in Writing, saying,*

Ver. 23. *Thus saith Cyrus, King of Persia, all the Kingdoms of the Earth hath the LORD God of Heaven given me, and he hath charged me to build him an House in Jerusalem, which is in Judah; who is there among you of all his People? the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.*] These two Verses, which conclude this Book, begin the next, where I will explain them; and only take Notice here, that thus the *Targum* translates this Proclamation: Thus saith *Cyrus*, King of *Persia*, all the Kingdoms of this Earth hath the WORD of the LORD God of Heaven delivered unto me; and he commanded me to build him, a Sanctuary in *Jerusalem*, &c. Which evidently shews, this Paraphrast believed the WORD dwelt in the Sanctuary.



(That the Word of the LORD by the Mouth of Jeremiah the Prophet might be fulfilled)] Who foretold that after seventy Years were accomplished, the King of Babylon and the Chaldeans should be destroyed, and the People of Judah restored to their own Land, chap. xxv. 12. xxix. 10.

The LORD stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus King of Persia, that he made a Proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and put it also in Writing, saying,] God, who had so long ago designed him for this Work, suggested these Thoughts to him, and excited him to prosecute them; which he did, not only by causing his Will and Pleasure to be proclaimed, but to be put in Writing, that none might mistake his Meaning.

Ver. 2. Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, The LORD God of Heaven] It is an Observation of Mr. Mede, that as before the Captivity, when they spake of God they called him the LORD of Hosts; so the constant Style of the holy Books after the Captivity, is the God of Heaven: As here, and chap. vi. 10. vii. 21. But it is a Question whether Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes penned these Writings themselves, wherein they proclaimed the God of the Jews to be the LORD God of Heaven: Or, whether they were drawn up by some of the Jews that attended upon them. It seems likely to me, that God, who raised up the Spirit of Cyrus to be a peculiar Instrument of the freeing his People from Slavery, did enlighten his Mind to understand that there was but one only God whom the Jews worshipped, and who spake in those holy Books which were shewn him. And Artaxerxes might call the Law of Moses, the Law of the God of Heaven, knowing the Jews worshipped no other God, whose Law this was.

Hath given me all the Kingdoms of the Earth,] That is, all those large Dominions which the Assyrians and Babylonians had enjoyed.

And he hath charged me to build him an House at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.] So he understood from Isaiah xlv. 13. where God saith of Cyrus, He shall build my City, of which the Temple was the principal Part: And more plainly, chap. xlv. 18. He shall say to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, thy Foundation shall be laid. Josephus hath thus paraphrased upon these Words, Ἐπεὶ μὲν ὁ Θεὸς τὸ οὐκ ἐκ μέρους ἀπὸ ἐκείνου Βασιλεῖα, &c. Because the greatest God hath constituted me the King of the World, I believe him to be he whom the People of Israel adore. For he foretold me King by his Prophets, and that I should build his Temple at Jerusalem, in the Land of Judea.

Ver. 3. Who is there among you all of his People, &c.] Not of the Jews only, but of Israel also, who were under his Government, the Assyrians and Medes being his Subjects. And so Josephus (as I observ'd before) says, that Zerobabel sent the Edict of Cyrus into Media, to the rest of the ten Tribes: To whom he not only makes a Promulgation of Liberty to go to their own Country, but desires them to go, and prays God to be with them, and prosper them in building God's House, whom he acknowledges to be the true and only God. This was a marvellous Encouragement to them.

Ver. 4. And whosoever remaineth in any Place where he sojourneth,] This seems to relate to such as were desirous to go up with their Brethren, but were forced to stay behind for Want of Necessaries to support them in so long a Journey.

Let the Men of his Place help him with Silver, and with Gold, and with Goods, and with Beasts,] He therefore requires his Officers to furnish them with such Things as they needed.

Besides the Freewill-offering for the House of God that is in Jerusalem.] Which he supposed the richer Sort of Jews would readily make to assist their poor Brethren; tho' they themselves being well settled in Babylon, did not think fit to stir till they saw how these would succeed.

Ver. 5. Then rose up the Chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and the Levites, with all those whose Spirit God had raised to go up,] There were some of other Tribes besides Judah and Benjamin that went up (1 Chron. ix. 3.) though these were the principal, who all needed a special Motion from God to quicken and encourage them to this Enterprize; the Difficulties being so great which they were to encounter in a long Journey, and their Country lying waste when they came thither; this made those, who had got Possessions in Babylon, to chuse to stay there.

To build the House of the LORD which is in Jerusalem.] This was the Design, which People of great Piety chearfully undertook, that the publick Worship of the true God might be restored, whom they now worshipped only in private.

Ver. 6. And all they that were about them, strengthened their Hands with Vessels of Silver, with Gold, with Goods, and with Beasts, and with precious Things,] Such was the Authority of the King, and such was the Influence of God upon their Hearts, that all their Neighbours encouraged them to this Work, and enabled them to undertake this Journey to Jerusalem.

Besides all that was willingly offered.] Their Brethren freely offer'd them their Assistance, tho' they did not think fit to go along with them.

Ver. 7. Also Cyrus the King brought forth the Vessels of the House of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the House of his Gods:] Where by a singular Providence they had been preserved till this Time, being look'd upon as sacred Things, which Nebuchadnezzar would not turn to his own private Use, but dedicated to his Gods. Some think the Ark was among the sacred Things which Cyrus caused to be restored; but it should first be proved that it was carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon, which no where appears to be true. The Argument they bring for it is, that in the second Temple Sacrifices were offered as in the first, and all solemn Days observed, especially the great Day of Expiation, when the Law ordained the Blood should be sprinkled before the Mercy-Seat, which could not be done when there was none; and there was none, if there was no Ark. But as the Jews universally acknowledge, this was one of the five Things wanting in the second Temple; so, unless the divine Glory

Glory had been there also, the Ark would have signified little. Therefore it is more likely, that by the Absence of these, God would signify, he was withdrawing his Presence from that House of Stone, to dwell in the Temple of Christ's Body; who offered himself to God, and thereby put an End to those figurative Sacrifices.

Ver. 8. *Even those did Cyrus, King of Persia, bring forth by the Hand of Mithredath, the Treasurer,]* This was a Name frequent among the Persians, derived from their God Mithra; as Cyrus himself had his Name (*Hesychius* saith), from the Sun, which in their Language was called Kūg☉.

And numbred them unto Sheshbazzar the Prince of Judah.] Which was another Name for Zerobabel, mentioned c. iii. 2, 8. and c. v. 14, 16. For it was common in the Time of the Captivity for the great Men of Judah to have two Names: One of their own Country, which was Domestick; another of the Chaldeans, which was used at Court, *Dan. i. 7. Nehemiah* had two Names; and this of Sheshbazzar seems to have been a good Omen of their flourishing Condition; being compounded of two Words, signifying *fine Linen* and *Gold*. On the contrary, Zerobabel was a Name importing the Misery of the People of Israel at that Time; for it is as much as an *Exile*, or *Stranger* in *Babylon*, where he was born. Thus pious Men, even in the midst of the Honours they had at Court, (for *Josephus* saith, Zerobabel was one of the Guard of the King's Body) were admonished not to forget their Brethren, but sympathize with them in their Miseries.

Ver. 9. *And this is the Number of them: thirty Chargers of Gold, a thousand Chargers of Silver, nine and twenty Knives,]* See *Dr. Lightfoot*, of the Temple, p. 233, 234.

Ver. 10. *Thirty Basons of Gold, Silver Basons of a second Sort four hundred and ten, and other Vessels a thousand.*

Ver. 11. *All the Vessels of Gold and of Silver, were five thousand and four hundred.]* Here seems to be some Difficulty; for all the Vessels that are specially named, make no more in Number than two thousand four hundred and ninety nine: To which many think this a sufficient Answer, that it is said in *2 Chron. xxxvi. 18. Nebuchadnezzar* carried away all the Vessels, both great and small. Now in the Account that is here given, the larger Vessels only, which were of greater Bigness and Price, are mention'd; but the gross Sum comprehends all, both great and small, and amounts to the Number of five thousand and four hundred: But *Tremellius* solves this, by translating the last Words of the former Verse otherwise than we do; not of other Vessels a thousand, but other Vessels by thousands, viz. almost three thousand, wanting one hundred; which our Mr. Mede judges a true Translation, in his *Daniel's Weeks*, Book iii. p. 700.

All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the Captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.] Which Restoration of the Jews to their own Land seems to be a greater Miracle than the first Conquest of it: For

Joshua did that by Force of Arms; but these Exiles recovered their Country without any Force at all; and were settled in it, notwithstanding many great Impediments to hinder it.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **N**OW these are the Children of the Province that went up out of the Captivity,] Some by the Province understand *Babylon*; in which these People were most of them born, and had all lived a long Time; but I think it more likely to be meant of *Judea*, which was made a Province when it was conquered, and *Gedaliah* constituted the Governor of it; and in this Book is called the Province of *Judea*, *ch. v. 8.*

Of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon,] Their Parents and Ancestors had been carried away by him, and they in them.

And came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his City;] *Jerem. xxxii. 15. Nehem. xi. 3.* Their Land and their Cities had been laid so desolate, and had been so long neglected, and were infested also by such bad Neighbours, that it was a great Piece of Generosity in these Men to return thither: And their Names are recorded to the eternal Honour of them, and of their Posterity; they being the first Planters of this Country, after it had been laid waste.

Ver. 2. *Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.]* These were their Heads, who undertook to conduct them; among whom Zerubbabel was the Prince, or Leader in Chief; as *Jeshua* was High-Priest, who is mentioned next to him. *Nehemiah*, who follows after him, is not the same, whose Book comes after this; for he did not go now, but afterward; or, if he did, he returned to *Babylon* again. See our famous *Reynolds* in his Censure of the Apocryphal Books, *Prælect. cxii. and cxviii.* Nor is it likely, that this *Mordecai* was the same with him that was *Esther's* Cousin, but some other Person; there being another of that Name mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*. See the same *Reynolds*, *Prælect. cxlvii.*

The Number of the Men of the People of Israel.] They who were called the Children of the Province before, are now called the People of Israel; for from him they were derived, though most of them were of the Tribe of Judah.

Ver. 3. *The Children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.]* He begins first to reckon up the Families that went up; of which this was one of the largest, descended from *Parosh*, who was their Ancestor.

Ver. 4. *The Children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.]* This was another Family, descended from this Man. The same is to be said of the rest.

Ver. 5. *The Children of Aaron, seven hundred seventy and five.]* So many gave in their Names in *Babylon*, that they intended to return into *Judea*.

Judæa : But it appears by *Nehem. vii. 10.* that there came no more thither than six hundred fifty and two ; therefore it is supposed, that the rest altered their Minds, or died by the Way. The same must be said of several other Differences between this Account, and that in *Nehemiah*.

Ver. 6. *The Children of Pabath-moab, of the Children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve.*] Here seems to be two Families joined together, one from *Pabath-moab*, the other from *Jeshua-joab*, (as the other may be translated) which both together make the greatest Body of those that went up. And six more added themselves ; for in *Nehem. vii. 11.* they are said to have been two thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

Ver. 7. *The Children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 8. *The Children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 9. *The Children of Zaccai, seven hundred and threescore.*

Ver. 10. *The Children of Bani, six hundred forty and two.*

Ver. 11. *The Children of Bebai, six hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 12. *The Children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 13. *The Children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.*

Ver. 14. *The Children of Bigvai, two thousand fifty and six.*

Ver. 15. *The Children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 16. *The Children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.*

Ver. 17. *The Children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 18. *The Children of Jorah, an hundred and twelve.*

Ver. 19. *The Children of Hasbun, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 20. *The Children of Gibbar ninety and five.*] Or, as it is in *Nehemiah vii. 25.* the Children of *Gibeon* ; these being the Citizens of that City. For this is not the Name of a Man, but of a Place ; and so are several that follow : Which hath made some think, that the foregoing are not the Names of Men, but of Cities or Countries, the People of which are called the Children of such Places ; which is frequent in the Scripture Language, where we read of the Children of *Sion*, the Children of *Egypt*, the Children of the East, &c.

Ver. 21. *The Children of Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three.*] These were such as belonged to that City ; unto which they went up, ver. 1.

Ver. 22. *The Children of Netophah, fifty and six.*] This was a Town near to *Bethlehem*.

Ver. 23. *The Men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.*] A famous Place in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, where the Prophet *Jeremiah* was born. But there are those who think it not improbable, that these were Cities in the Country of *Babylon* ; which the *Jews* had built, and called by the Names of those Cities in their own Country, from whence they were banished ; of which they were desirous to preserve a Re-

membrance. Thus the *Spaniards* at this Day have Cities in *America*, called *Corduba*, *Granada*, *Carthagena*, &c. that they may not suffer the Memory of their antient Country to perish, when they were removed to a far distant Land. But I see no Ground for this.

Ver. 24. *The Children of Azmaveth, forty and two.*] Or, of *Beth-Azmaveth*, as it is called *Nehemiah vii. 28.*

Ver. 25. *The Children of Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty and three.*

Ver. 26. *The Children of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one.*] These seem to have been Cities in the Tribe of *Benjamin* ; and so, it's likely, were the foregoing, and some of those that follow.

Ver. 27. *The Men of Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 28. *The Men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 29. *The Children of Nebo, fifty and two.*

Ver. 30. *The Children of Magbish, an hundred fifty and six.*

Ver. 31. *The Children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four.*] There is another *Elam* mentioned ver. 7. which argues the former to be the Name of a Town ; from which the very same Number of Persons went up, that there did from this.

Ver. 32. *The Children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 33. *The Children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and five*] These were three Towns in the Tribe of *Benjamin* ; which make it probable *Harim* was so likewise.

Ver. 34. *The Children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 35. *The Children of Senaah, three thousand and six hundred and thirty.*] It is uncertain whether this be the Name of a Person, or of a Place ; but the greatest Number of Persons went from hence, that did from any of the fore-mentioned.

Ver. 36. *The Priests :*] Having numbred the People that went from *Judah* and *Benjamin*, he proceeds now to the Tribe of *Levi* ; and first mentions the Priests.

The Children of Jedaiah of the House of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy and three.] He is mentioned in *1 Chron. xxiv. 7.* as a principal Person among the Priests. See Dr. *Lightfoot*, p. 916.

Ver. 37. *The Children of Immer, a thousand fifty and two.*] He is mentioned also in *1 Chron. xxiv. 14.* as Head of one of the twenty four Courses of Priests.

Ver. 38. *The Children of Pasbur, a thousand two hundred forty and seven.*] He is mentioned also, *1 Chron. ix. 12.*

Ver. 39. *The Children of Harim, a thousand and seventeen.*] See *1 Chron. xxiv. 8.* where he is mentioned as Head of another Course of the Priests.

Ver. 40. *The Levites : the Children of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the Children of Hodaviah, seventy and four.*] See *Nehem. vii. 43.*

Ver. 41. *The Singers : the Children of Asaph, an hundred twenty and eight.*

Ver. 42. *The Children of the Porters : the Children of Shallum, the Children of Ater, the Children of*

dren of Talmon, the Children of Akkub, the Children of Hatita, the Children of Shobai, in all, an hundred thirty and nine.

Ver. 43. *The Nethinims:]* These are generally taken to be of the Race of the Gibeonites; who being given to the Service of the Temple, were called *Nethinims*, which imports as much as *given*. But this is a Mistake, the *Nethinims* being those whom David gave to help the Levites, as I have observed before.

The Children of Ziba, the Children of Hasupha, the Children of Tabbaoth,] It is not said, how many came from each Family: But it appears, there were several Families of them, and their whole Number is mentioned in ver. 58.

Ver. 44. *The Children of Keros, the Children of Siaba, the Children of Padon.*

Ver. 45. *The Children of Lebanah, the Children of Hagabah, the Children of Akkub.]* The Number of these Families, and those that follow, is not set down particularly; but they are all comprehended in that Sum mentioned ver. 58.

Ver. 46. *The Children of Hagab, the Children of Shalmai, the Children of Hanan,*

Ver. 47. *The Children of Giddel, the Children of Gabar, the Children of Reaiab,*

Ver. 48. *The Children of Rezin, the Children of Nekoda, the Children of Gazzam,*

Ver. 49. *The Children of Uzzab, the Children of Paseab, the Children of Besai,*

Ver. 50. *The Children of Asnah, the Children of Mebunim, the Children of Nephusim,*

Ver. 51. *The Children of Bakbuk, the Children of Hakupha, the Children of Harbur,*

Ver. 52. *The Children of Bazluth, the Children of Mebida, the Children of Harsha,*

Ver. 53. *The Children of Barkos, the Children of Sifera, the Children of Thamab,*

Ver. 54. *The Children of Neziab, the Children of Hatipha.*

Ver. 55. *The Children of Solomons Servants:]* These were a distinct People among the Jews; but it is uncertain who they were. Some take them to have been originally descended from Slaves, whom Solomon took in War; and who afterwards became Profelytes. But there was no War in his Days; therefore others think, they were such of other Nations as came to serve Solomon in servile Work, during the building of the Temple; who being profelyted, he deputed them to the perpetual Conservation and Reparation of it; as Joshua had done the Gibeonites, to be Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water there: Or, they were some of the Reliques of the Canaanites, who delivered up themselves to Solomon, 1 Kings ix. 20, 21. Whosoever they were, it appears from ver. 55. of this Chapter, that they had the same Employment with the *Nethinims* about the Temple, or something like it; for they are numbred together with them.

The Children of Sotai, the Children of Sophereth, the Children of Peruda,] These, and they that follow in the two next Verses, are the Families of the fore-named Persons.

Ver. 56. *The Children of Jaalab, the Children of Darkon, the Children of Giddel.*

Ver. 57. *The Children of Shephatiah, the Children of Hattil, the Children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the Children of Ami.*

Ver. 58. *All the Nethinims, and the Children of Solomons Servants, were three hundred ninety and two.]* This makes it probable, that the *Nethinims* and the Children of Solomon's Servants (as I said before) were employed in the same or the like Employment; being both mentioned together: To whose Honour it must be observed, that, tho' they were not of the Children of Israel, and were despised by them, (there being Decrees made by the Sanhedrin, as the Jews tell us, that they should not marry with the Gibeonites, who they fancy are here meant) yet they were more forward to return to Jerusalem, and build the House of the LORD, (where they were to serve in lower Ministries) than the Levites themselves. For there were greater Numbers of them returned than of the Levites and Singers, as appears by comparing this Verse with ver. 40, 41.

Ver. 59. *And these were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-barsa, Cherub, Addan and Immer: But they could not shew their Fathers House, and their Seed, whether they were of Israel.]* These are Names of some Cities in Chaldaea, or Mesopotamia, from whence many went along with them to Judaea: And, as some think, they were Jews or Profelytes, who were carried captive by Salmanasser into Assyria. Now these could not shew the Families from whence they were derived, and so could not obtain any certain Possession in Judaea; as the rest did, who knew to what Family and City they belonged.

Ver. 60. *The Children of Delaiab, the Children of Tobiab, the Children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.]* These were Persons who could not make out their Pedigree; and yet were desirous to live among the People of God, and see his Worship restored.

Ver. 61. *And of the Children of the Priests: the Children of Habaiah, the Children of Koz, the Children of Barzillai, (which took a Wife of the Daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their Name.)]* This Person, whosoever he was, thought it so great an Honour to be descended from such a noble Family as that of Barzillai, that he chose to be called by that Name, which he preferred before his own in the Family of the Priests: By which vain Ambition he lost his Title to the Priesthood, because he could not make out his Pedigree from the Priests, but from Barzillai.

Ver. 62. *These sought their Register among those who were reckoned by Genealogy, but they were not found:]* The Words may be more plainly translated out of the Hebrew, in this Manner, *these being numbred among the Priests, (or, reckoned in the Priestly Genealogy) sought the Register, the Record of it in Writing, but could not find it.* The Jews were so careful to keep the Priesthood pure, that they preserved an exact Account of the Parents, the Kindred, and the Quality of every Priest; because there were some Women the Priests might not marry, whose Children were accounted impure; as Mr. Selden hath shewn at large, Lib. ii. *De Success. ad Pontificatum*, Cap. ii. p. 213. and Cap. iii. p. 215. But when the City and Temple were burnt, and the People carried away in a tumultuous confused Manner, into Babylon;

lon; many Tables of Genealogy perished, and could not be recovered.

Therefore were they, as polluted, put from the Priesthood.] Not permitted to perform the Office of Priests; because it did not appear that they were legally descended from Priests.

Ver. 63. *And the Tirshatba]* Some think, (particularly *Jacobus Capellus*) that by the *Tirshatba* is here meant *Zerubbabel*: It being a general Name, they suppose, for all chief Governors. So *Nehemiah* is called, c. viii. 9. and x. 1. whom others therefore will have to be here meant; who was a kind of Judge, (as the *Persian* Word signifies) and gave the Sentence which here follows, when he came to *Judaea*: Which was a good while after this first Company arrived there. Others interpret it, the *King's Commissioner*; for *Zerubbabel* was no more. See *J. Rainolds*, in his Censure of the Apocryphal Books, *Prælect.* cxviii.

Said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy Things,] That is, they should not partake of the Sacrifices offered for Sin, nor of the right Shoulder of Peace-offerings, nor of the Shew-bread; which were all most holy, and the Portion of the Priests alone. This shews, that *Tirshatba*, whosoever he was, had great Power and Authority; who could lay such a Restraint upon those that had been held for Priests.

Till there stood up a Priest with Urim and with Thummim.] Till the LORD himself should shew, (when he vouchsafed such an High-Priest, as was in the first Temple) whether they were of the Line of *Aaron*, or no. He doth not quite reject and exclude them, but left them their Claim; yet would not admit them to enjoy that which was the sole Right of the Priests: Which he could not determine whether it belonged to them; but the Oracle being ceased, waited till God, who knew all Things, should declare it. Thus careful they were to distinguish Families, that Strangers might not come to inherit among God's People; and especially that the Priesthood might not be invaded, by any who were unqualified for it. See *Buxtorf*, in his *Historia Urim & Thummim*, p. 323, 327.

It is evident from this Place, that the *Urim* and *Thummim* were either lost, or burnt with the Temple; and whether they were after this restored, that is, whether any Priest with this Authority was raised up after the Captivity was ended, we are no where informed. If there was, it was only (as *Dr. Jackson* well speaks, *Book i.* on the *Creed*, Chap. xi.) to give this People a Farewel of God's extraordinary speaking to them, either by Priests or by Prophets, till *Christ* came. *Josephus* confesses, that Revelation by *Urim* and *Thummim* did cease two hundred Years before his Time: But more probably this, as other Kinds of Prophecy, and many extraordinary Tokens of God's Power and Presence, (sometimes most frequent in this Nation) did cease with that Generation which returned from Captivity, or immediately after the finishing the second Temple: As if, during all that Time (to use the Words of that great Man before-mentioned) God had appointed a *Fast* or *Vigil*, as an Introduction to the Fulness of Time; wherein (as

V O L. II.

Joel prophesied, v. 28.) God would pour out his Spirit upon all Flesh; upon the Gentile, as well as the Jew, *Malach. i.* 11. For this Cause God imposed this long Fast upon the Jews, that he might humble them, and teach them, that he was not their God alone, but of the Gentiles also. The Jews generally acknowledge there was no *Urim* and *Thummim* under the second Temple; and even they that say there was, (because it was necessary the High-Priest should have his Garments complete) yet say, there was no Answer from God given by it; which is as much as to say, there was none at all. See *Buxtorf*, *Hist. Urim & Thummim*, Cap. v.

Ver. 64. *The whole Congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore;]* This was but a small Number in Comparison with that vast Multitude which came out of *Egypt*, yet more than double to that Number which was carried away Captive by *Nebuchadnezzar*. But here occurs a small Difficulty (like that in the End of the foregoing Chapter) for if we put together the several Sums before-mentioned, they amount to no more than twenty nine thousand eight hundred and eighteen; so there wants above twelve thousand to make up this Number of forty thousand three hundred and threescore. But where shall we find them, say the Jews in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxix? To which they there answer, that they were of the rest of the Tribes of *Israel*, who came up with those of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. Or, they might be *Levites*, or other *Israelites*, who could not make out their Descent. Which is a very solid Answer, for there is no doubt but many of their Brethren of the Ten Tribes incorporated themselves with the Two Tribes in Captivity, and took the Advantage of returning with them: Which may be the Meaning of those Words in the first Chapter, ver. 5. *Then rose up the Chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, with all them whose Spirit God had raised to go up*: That is, saith *Diodate*, all those of other Tribes, according to *1 Chron. ix. 3*.

Ver. 65. *Besides their Servants and their Maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven:]* Tho' all that returned were not Jews, but some of the ten Tribes joined with them; yet they did not amount, Slaves and all, to fifty thousand. Now what is this Number to what they were in *Jehoshaphat's* Time, when *Judah* had in it two hundred thousand fighting Men?

And there were among them two hundred singing Men and singing Women.] Whether these were now become Servants is not certain; but it seems to be manifest from *1 Chron. xxv. 5, 6*. that Women, as well as Men, sung in the House of the LORD.

Ver. 66. *Their Horses were seven hundred thirty and six: Their Mules two hundred forty and five.]* Their Poverty appears, as by the small Number of Servants that attended them, so by the little Parcel of Cattle which they had to carry them.

Ver. 67. *Their Camels four hundred thirty and five: Their Asses six thousand seven hundred and twenty.]* Most of the People therefore travelled

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on

on Foot, for these would but suffice to carry their Baggage (as we speak) or little more.

Ver. 68. *And some of the Chief of the Fathers, when they came to the House of the LORD which is at Jerusalem,*] That is, to the Place in which the Temple stood, unto which it seems their pious Affections carried them, as soon as they came to Jerusalem.

Offered freely for the House of God, to set it up in his Place:] Made a new Offering besides that which they brought out of Babylon from their Brethren there, mentioned Chap. i. 4, 6. By this it appears, that the Jews were not made such poor Slaves in Babylon as wrought for their Lords and Masters, but had Liberty to trade and get Riches for themselves; some of them being advanced to considerable Offices in the King's Court. Otherwise they could not have been able to offer such Sums as are mentioned in the next Verse. And the like Contribution, tho' not so large, was made for the Support of the second Company that went up from Babylon, as Josephus tells us, *Lib. xi. Cap. 4.* where he saith, the Jews in Babylon gave their Brethren who were going to their own Country, a hundred Pound of Gold, and five thousand of Silver. But most of these rich Men continued still in Babylon, being well settled there, and in a thriving Condition: Infomuch that R. Elieser was wont to say (as he is quoted by a converted Jew) *The Bran only returned to Judæa, the fine Flour still remained in Babylon.* See *Jerem. xxix. 4, 5, 28.* But this is a Conceit advanced to elude the Prophecies which belong to their Return from Babylon, and apply them to their present Captivity from the Romans.

Ver. 69. *They gave after their Ability unto the Treasure of the Work,*] which was presently erected, according to the ancient Pattern in David's Time, *1 Chron. xxvi. 20.*

Threescore and one thousand Drams of Gold, and five thousand Pound of Silver, and one hundred Priests Garments.] Garments, as well as Gold and Silver, were wont to be laid up in Treasures, as appears by our Saviour's Words, *Lay up for yourselves Treasures, where neither Moth nor Rust do corrupt,* *Matth. vi. 20.* Moths do not corrupt Silver and Gold, but only Garments. See *Job xxvii. 16.*

Ver. 70. *So the Priests and the Levites, and some of the People, and the Singers, and the Porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their Cities,*] They are here set down in that Order wherein they are reckoned from Verse 36. and the good Order is observed that was among them, every one going to the City where his Ancestors dwelt; and so did all Israel, as well as Judah and Benjamin, *ch. vi. 16, 17.* Thus the Foundation of this poor Commonwealth was laid in a marvellous Concord, there being no Strife nor Contention among them that came up, tho' of different Orders and Qualities; but they had one Heart and Soul like the first Christians, without which Unity no People can be preserved. And that it may be cherished, they must avoid those Things that destroy it, which are (as *Job. Wolphius* here observes) principally φιλαυτία and πολυπεργυρασύνη, Self-love, and meddling in other Mens Matters.

And all Israel in their Cities.] When the Ten Tribes were carried Captives by *Salmanasser* into Assyria, they were not carried away intirely, but some of every Tribe left, who, with Judah and Benjamin, were afterwards carried to Babylon by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and now restored by *Cyrus*. By this our Pimate *Usher* explains what we read afterward, *ch. vi. 17, 18.* that they offered twelve He-goats, according to the Number of the Children of Israel; *ad A. Mundi 3468.* And indeed there were some Reliques of the Ten Tribes till their last Destruction, *Acts xxvi. 7.*

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND when the seventh Month was come, and the Children of Israel were in the Cities, the People gathered themselves together, as one Man, to Jerusalem.*] We are nowhere told in what Month they began their Journey from Babylon. But from *ch. vii. 9.* we understand it was a Journey of four Months from thence to Jerusalem; so that we may safely conclude they came out in the Spring Time in the first or second Month, and having spent a short Time in settling themselves in their several Cities, the seventh approached, or drew nigh (so it must be understood, and should be rendered) in which was the first Feast that fell out after they came into Judæa; which they assembled themselves unanimously to celebrate at Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *Then stood up Jeshua the Son of Jozadak, and his Brethren the Priests,*] He was the High-Priest, called Jeshua in *Haggai i. 1.*

And Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel; and his Brethren,] He is called there the Governor of Judah, being appointed by the King of Persia to that Office. And he is there put before Jeshua, as here he is put after: The Viceroy and the High-Priest being *Pares dignitate aut suppare*, as *Bochartus* speaks. See below *ver. 8.* and *ch. iv. 3.* and *v. 2.*

And builded the Altar of the God of Israel to offer Burnt-offerings thereon,] Which were the most ancient Offerings of all others.

As it is written in the Law of Moses the Man of God.] Where, in the very Beginning of the Book of *Leviticus*, there is an Order for the Burnt-Sacrifices before any other.

Ver. 3. *And they set the Altar*] Before they began to lay the Foundation of the Temple; for they would not have Sacrifices wanting while it was building.

Upon his Bases,] That is, in the Place, some think, where it anciently stood. Which was done, *Maimonides* saith, by the Authority of the Prophets, who were then among them. Here the Reader must remember what I have observed upon *1 Chron. ix. 11, 21, 23.* that till the Temple could be built, they erected a Tabernacle wherein the Service of God was performed, as it was before *Solomon's* Temple was built. But I noted there, *ver. 18.* that it did not stand on Mount *Moriah*, but on Mount *Sion*; and therefore the Altar was also there, and not in the Place where it anciently stood till the Temple was finished.

(For

(For Fear was upon them, because of the People of those Countries)] The Particle *ki*, which we translate *for*, signifies *altho'*; and so it had been better rendered here, *Altho'* they were in great Fear of their evil Neighbours, yet notwithstanding they would not desist from restoring the Worship of God; but if we take it as we translate it, the Meaning is plain that they were the more zealous to restore the Worship of God, that they might upon all Occasions flee to him for Succour against their Enemies, of whom they were in Dread.

And they offered Burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, even Burnt-offerings, Morning and Evening;] Which is called in the Law of Moses the continual Burnt-offering, *Exod. xxix. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42. Numb. xxviii. 3, 6.*

Ver. 4. They kept also the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written,] *Exod. xxiii. 16.* The seventh Month was so remarkable for many Solemnities appointed to be held in it, that I cannot think they kept only the Feast of Tabernacles; for on the very first Day of the Month there was to be an holy Convocation, *Numb. xxix. 1, &c.* on which they began to offer Sacrifice, as it is said here, *ver. 6.* And on the tenth Day was another holy Convocation, which was the most solemn in all the Year, being the great Day of Atonement, *Numb. xxix. 7.* With these, I suppose, they began; and especially on the tenth Day begged Pardon of God for their Sins, which had cast them out of their Land; and then proceeded on the fifteenth Day to thank God for their Restoration, by keeping the Feast of Tabernacles.

And offered the daily Burnt-offerings by Number, according to the Custom, as the Duty of every Day required.] On every Day of the Feast, which lasted seven Days, there were special Sacrifices appointed by the Law, and in great Numbers; as may be seen, *Numb. xxix. 13, 17, &c.* which put this poor People to great Expences; but their Piety now was such, that they valued nothing so much as the Service of God.

Ver. 5. And afterward offered the continual Burnt-offerings, both of the new Moons, and of all the set Feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a Freewill-offering unto the LORD.

Ver. 6. From the first Day of the seventh Month began they to offer Burnt-offerings unto the LORD; but the Foundation of the Temple of the LORD was not yet laid.] The Meaning of these two Verses is, that holy Rites of Sacrificing were restored, and so were kept and continued ever after in their several Seasons, on the new Moons, and other festival Solemnities: And they began with the Morning and Evening Burnt-offering, which was never to be omitted, but in every Solemnity was to have the Precedence, and be offered in the first Place. See *Numb. xxviii. 3, 4, &c.*

Ver. 7. They gave Money also unto the Masons, and to the Carpenters;] To prepare Materials for the Building.

And Meat, and Drink, and Oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre,] Who wanted these Things more than Money, as appears by the

History of Solomon's Building, *1 Kings v. 10.*

To bring Cedar Trees from Lebanon to the Sea of Joppa:] As they had done in the Days of Solomon, *1 Kings v. 9.*

According to the Grant that they had of Cyrus King of Persia.] Who commanded, I suppose, those of Tyre and Zidon to assist them.

Ver. 8. Now in the second Year of their coming unto the House of God at Jerusalem,] That is, to the Place where the House of God formerly stood.

In the second Month,] All the Time before this, in the latter End of the last Year, was spent, it is probable, in removing the Rubbish, and preparing the Ground for laying the Foundation, as much as the Winter would permit; which was not a Season to begin the Work; but after the Passover, I presume, they entered upon it.

Began Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the Son of Jozadak, and the Remnant of their Brethren the Priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the Captivity unto Jerusalem;] Here Zerubbabel is put before Jeshua, as (*ver. 1.*) Jeshua was put before him: Whereby we learn they were of equal Dignity, in the Account of the Jews; for Zerubbabel was not a King, but a Governor of the Province of Judea, under the King of Persia, as *Nehemiah* was, *chap. v. 14, 15.* under whom there were Princes and Rulers, that is, the Heads of Families, *ch. ix. 2.* and below them, there were Captains of Thousands, &c. and other Subaltern Officers, *ch. x. 8, 14.* and after all, in the fourth Place, the great Congregation: Which *Bertram* makes Account was the Government of the Jews, after their Return from the Captivity. See him, *de Republica Judaica*, *Cap. xiii.* where he undertakes to make out the four Orders from *Nehem. v. 7, &c.*

And appointed the Levites from twenty Years old and upward, to set forward the Work of the House of the LORD.] For since the Time of David, they were thought fit at twenty Years of Age to attend the Service of God in his House.

Ver. 9. Then stood Jeshua with his Sons, and his Brethren;] Not Jeshua the High-Priest beforementioned, but another Jeshua, who was a Levite, mentioned *chap. ii. 40.*

Kadmiel and his Sons, the Sons of Judah together,] Who is called there *Hodaviah.*

To set forward the Workmen in the House of God:] They being made Overseers of the Work.

The Sons of Henadad, with their Sons, and their Brethren the Levites.] These were afterwards added to the fore-named, as their Assistants.

Ver. 10. And when the Builders laid the Foundation of the Temple of the LORD, they set the Priests in their Apparel with Trumpets, and the Levites the Sons of Asaph with Cymbals, to praise the LORD,] While the Sacrifices, I suppose, at the same Time were offered, they sung Praise to God with such Instruments as they had; which were only Cymbals, for it is like they had not yet got Harps and Lutes. The Apocryphal *Esdras* saith, they laid the Foundation in the new Moon; but *Calvisius* thinks it more probable to have been laid the Day after, the new Moon being a Festival.

After

After the Ordinance of David King of Israel.]
1 Chron. xvi. 7. xxv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And they sung together by Course,]* That is, answered one to another; for from hence was derived the Manner of praying and praising God in the Christian Service alternatively, as Mr. Mede observes, *Book i. Discourse xvi.* where he notes how the Seraphims cried one to another, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, LORD God of Hosts, &c. Isaiah vi. 3.*

In praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever towards Israel.] Thus many of the *Psalms* of David begin, cvii. cxxviii. and cxxxvi. which last *Psalm*, it is probable, was now sung entirely, in every Verse of which these Words are repeated, *His Mercy endureth for ever.*

And all the People shouted with a great Shout when they praised the LORD, because the Foundation of the House of the LORD was laid.] That is, every one expressed their Thankfulness and Joy, in such Manner as they were able; the *Priests* and *Levites* with Singing and Musick, and the People with Shouting, which is a natural Expression of Joy, and as acceptable as the most artificial Compositions.

Ver. 12. *But many of the Priests and Levites, and Chief of the Fathers, who were ancient Men, that had seen the first House,]* As many of them might have done, it not being above threescore (or as some compute, sixty one) Years since it was burnt: And some of them lived long after this, which was the first Year of *Cyrus*; for some prolonged their Days (as *Huerius* observes) till the second Year of *Darius Hystaspis*, which was eighteen Years after the first of *Cyrus*.

When the Foundation of this House was laid before their Eyes, wept with a loud Voice, and many shouted aloud for Joy.] The younger Sort shouted, but many of the ancient People disturbed their Acclamations with Howlings; for though the Temple was intended to be built as large as the former, upon the same Foundation; yet there were not such goodly Stones to lay for the Foundation, as there was for *Solomon's* (1 Kings vii. 9, 10.) nor could they hope to build it so magnificently as he had done, nor was there any Appearance of the Divine Glory, or of a Priest with *Urim* and *Thummim*, and such like Things; which indeed were sad, but ought not to have made them weep so loud, and interrupt the publick Joy: Thankfulness for small Beginnings would better have become them, than Complaints that their Condition was no better.

Ver. 13. *So that the People could not discern the Noise of the Shout of Joy, from the Noise of the Weeping of the People:]* There was a great Confusion among them by these contrary Passions, which was very lamentable when God had been so very good to them all.

For the People shouted with a loud Shout, and the Noise was heard afar off.] Notwithstanding which, the young People continued to shout as loud as they could, and made the Noise of their Joy be heard farther off than the others Weeping was.

C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when the Adversaries of Judah and Benjamin] These were the Samaritans, who were grieved at their Return, ver. 10.

Heard that the Children of the Captivity builded the Temple unto the LORD God of Israel,] They being Neighbours were soon informed, not only of their Return from Captivity, but of their building the Temple.

Ver. 2. *Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the Chief of the Fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you;]* This People, no doubt, were desirous to partake of the Privileges which were granted to the Jews by the King of Persia; and so not only offered their Assistance towards the Building of the Temple, but would have been one People with them. So the following Words import.

For we seek your God as ye do, and we do sacrifice unto him,] They pretend to be of the same Religion with them, which is the greatest Bond of Union: But in Truth they were not; for tho' they worshipped God, yet they joined other feigned Gods with him, and therefore could not be admitted into Communion with them at the Temple.

Since the Days of Esar-haddon King of Assur, which brought us up hither.] The same with him mentioned 2 Kings xix. 39. who brought a second Colony, after that brought by *Salmanasser* when he first conquered them, to people the Country better; and sent a Priest also to instruct them, from whom they pretended to have received God's true Religion.

Ver. 3. *But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the Chief of the Fathers, said unto them, You have nothing to do with us to build an House unto our God,]* They knew them very well what they were, viz. a mixed People, not purely of the Seed of *Israel*, and of a medley Religion, not worshipping God purely; and therefore they would have nothing to do with them: And indeed they soon discovered their Hypocrisy by writing against the Work, which they would have hindered by making Divisions, if they had been among them.

But we our selves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus the King of Persia hath commanded us.] They resolve to admit no other People to join with them, but to pursue the Grant which King *Cyrus* had made to them alone, and to none other. These were the two Reasons why they rejected them, because they were not of the same People, and the King of Persia had granted this Licence to build the Temple only to the Jews.

Ver. 4. *Then the People of the Land]* That is, the fore-named Samaritans.

Weakened the Hands of the People of Judah,] Discouraged them in their Undertakings by false Reports and Slanders, and perhaps by Threatnings.

And troubled them in Building,] Laid all the Impediments they could in their Way, by hindering Materials or Provisions from coming to them, or by enticing away their Workmen, or such like Means.

Ver. 5. *And hired Counsellors against them, to frustrate their Purpose,*] They bribed some of the Council of the King of *Persia* to obstruct the Work; a frequent Mischief in Courts, as *Grotius* notes: Or, perhaps, they were some of the Officers of the King of *Persia* in *Samaria*, *Syria*, and *Judea*, whom they corrupted to cross this Design.

All the Days of Cyrus King of Persia,] Who being engaged in War with the *Lydians* and *Scythians*, could not attend such Affairs as this; but it went on slowly; which his Son *Cambyfes* regarded not at all, being no Friend of the *Jews*, nor of Religion.

Even until the Reign of Darius King of Persia,] Till *Darius* the Son of *Hystaspis*, who killing the *Magi* (who after *Cambyfes* had possessed themselves of the Kingdom) was made King; and marrying *Artossa* the Daughter of *Cyrus*, and loving her very much, confirmed the Decree of *Cyrus*, and followed his Steps that he might stand the safer himself. It is a great Controversy indeed between learned Men, whether this *Darius*, or *Darius Notbus* be here meant; and there are strong Arguments on both Sides, which it is an immense Labour to examine, with the Objections against them. It hath been lately done in Brief by a judicious Writer, who after all is constrained to conclude with a *NON LIQUET*; but yet he thinks the most weighty Reasons incline to *Darius Hystaspis*: See *Hermannus Witsius*, *Miscellanea Sacra*, Lib. i. Cap. xx.

Ver. 6. *And in the Reign of Abasuerus,*] Who this was, is very uncertain; there being many who think, that after *Cyrus* this was *Nomen Gentilitium* (as they call it) the Name of all their Kings (as *Pharaoh* was of all the Kings of *Egypt*) who were called *Xerxes*, or *Artaxerxes* (from *Abasuerus*, as *Grotius* thinks) besides the Name they had before they came to the Crown. Some therefore say this was *Cambyfes*, (so *Primate Usher*, ad *A. M.* 3476.) others *Darius Hystaspis*, others *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, or *Longimanus*; whose Disputes are very long about this Matter, but leave one no more satisfied than before he began to read them.

In the Beginning of his Reign, wrote they unto him an Accusation against the Inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.] Importing that they intended to set up for themselves, and not to depend upon the King of *Persia*.

Ver. 7. *And in the Days of Artaxerxes*] Who is before called *Abasuerus*, which is supposed to be his *Chaldee* Name, as *Artaxerxes* was his *Persian*: But *Dr. Alix*, who had examin'd these Things, looks upon it as absurd to suppose *Abasuerus* to have been the Name of all the *Persian* Kings, and takes this *Artaxerxes* to have been the Son of *Xerxes*, viz. *Artaxerxes Longimanus*.

Wrote Bishlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, and the rest of their Companions, unto Artaxerxes King of Persia;] These Men first drew up the Letter, which they intended to send to the King, being Governors, I suppose, under him on this Side of *Euphrates*; such as the *Greeks* call *Tetrarchs*.

And the Writing of the Letter was written in the Syrian Tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian

Tongue.] The Meaning may be, that they sent a brief Address to the King in the *Syrian* Tongue, and expounded their Business more largely to some of his Counsellors in the same Tongue. Or, by the first we may understand the Letter or Characters, and by the other the Words: So that the Meaning is, it was wrote both in *Syrian* Characters, and in *Syrian* Words. For sometimes a Letter or other Writing is sent in the Character of one Language, and in Words of another; as *Chaldee* and *Syrian* Words are wrote in the *Hebrew* Characters, and we oft-times write *Hebrew* Words in the *English* Characters. But this Letter was wrote, and was to be read in the same Language.

Ver. 8. *Rehum the Chancellor, and Shimshai the Scribe, wrote a Letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the King,*] These two were principal Persons in these Countries, who either joined with the other three before-mentioned, in the same Letter, or wrote another Letter of the same Import.

In this Sort :] Containing the same Complaint against the *Jews*.

Ver. 9. *Then wrote Rehum the Chancellor, and Shimshai the Scribe, and the rest of their Companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathkites, the Tarpe-lites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites,*] These nine Nations came out of *Affyria*, *Persia*, *Media*, *Susiana*, and other Provinces of that vast Empire; who with one Consent joined in this Letter or Petition. For, perhaps the King being loth to do any thing hastily upon the Motion of that Letter mentioned ver. 8. sent to have the Opinion of all these Nations, or the principal Persons among them; and of all other on this Side the River *Euphrates*, as it here follows.

Ver. 10. *And the rest of the Nations, whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the Cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this Side the River,*] Some take *Asnapper* to be another Name for *Salmanasser*, or for *Esarhaddon*, who sent these Colonies hither. But it is more reasonable to think he was some great Commander, who was intrusted by one or both of those Kings to conduct them, and bring them over (the River *Euphrates*) and see them settled in these Countries.

And at such a Time.] Which was expressed, no doubt, in the Letter; but here it is only noted in general, that the Year and the Day were mentioned, when it was subscribed.

Ver. 11. *This is the Copy of the Letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the King: Thy Servants the Men on this Side the River, and at such a Time.*] This was the Title of their Letter: The Letter itself followeth.

Ver. 12. *Be it known unto the King, that the Jews which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad City, and have set up the Walls thereof, and joined the Foundations.*] This was a mere Calumny; for they attempted no such Thing as to build the Walls of *Jerusalem*. But they speak in ambiguous Words (as *Huetius* observes) concerning the building of this City; which in one Sense was true. For they built Houses, without which it could not be inhabited; but they did

did not go about to encompass it with Walls, to defend the City against the Incurfions of their Enemies; which was not begun till a great while after. They are fallacious Words therefore, whereby they imposed upon the King's Belief, when they say, *they set up the Walls thereof*: For they only set up the Walls of their Houses, not of their City. And there is a Demonstration they did no more; for when it is said there was an Order from the King, that this City should not be built, and accordingly the Work was stopped, it is thus expressed, *ver. 24. then ceased the Work of the House of God, which is at Jerusalem.* It is not said, the Work of building the Walls of the City ceased, (for they were about no such Thing) but *the Work of the House of God*, which was all they did. Thus wicked Men compass their Ends by Lies and Fallacies with which they prepossess Mens Minds against the Truth. As for their calling it a *rebellious and bad City*, there was some Colour for it; their latter Kings having rebelled against the King of *Babylon*. And besides, the Laws and Customs of the *Jews* were such, as would not permit them to conform to the Manner of other Nations; which made their Neighbours have an ill Opinion of them, as an unsociable People.

Ver. 13. *Be it known now unto the King, that if this City be builded, and the Walls set up again, then will they not pay Toll, Tribute and Custom,* They pretend, the *Jews* would be no longer in Subjection, if their City was built; but set up for themselves, as a free People. By the first of these Words *Grotius* understands that which every Head paid to the King, which we call Poll-Money; by the second, the Excise (as we now speak) that was upon Commodities and Merchandize; and by the last, the Rent which their Land paid. But a late learned Man thinks, the first Word rather signifies that Part which every Man paid out of his Estate, according as it was valued; the second, that which was paid for every Head; and the third, that which was paid upon the High-Ways, by every Traveller who brought in Wares, or carried them out. *Herman. Witfius* in his *Miscell.* Pars ii. Exerc. xi. N. 20.

And so thou shalt endamage the Revenue of the Kings. They pretend to study nothing but the Profit of the King; and that neither he nor his Successors might lose any of the Duties owing to the Crown.

Ver. 14. *Now because we have Maintenance from the Kings Palace,* In the Hebrew it is, *we are salted with the Salt of the Palace*; i. e. received their Salary from the King, as *Junius* translates it. For it seems, they received their Stipend in Salt, (from whence it was called a Salary) which the Son of *Sirach* mentions among the Things necessary to human Life, *Ecclus.* xxxix. 31. And *Homer* calls it a *divine Thing*, because, as *Plutarch* expounds him, it seasons all Food, and gives a Relish to it. See *Dr. Cudworth*, of the *Lord's Supper*, p. 68.

And it was not meet for us to see the Kings Dishonour: It did not become them who received Maintenance from the King, to see him wronged any way.

Therefore have we sent and certified the King, Which they would have him think was the sole Cause of their writing, to inform him in the Truth.

Ver. 15. *That Search may be made in the Book of the Records of thy Fathers:* In the Chronicles of the Kings that had reigned before him; whom they call his *Fathers*, because they were his Predecessors in that Kingdom, wherein he now reigned. This Search shews, this Letter was written a long Time after the Edict of *Cyrus*.

So shalt thou find in the Book of the Records, and know, that this City is a rebellious City, and hurtful unto Kings and Provinces, and that they have moved Sedition within the same of old Time: for which Cause was this City destroyed. They mix some Truth with Abundance of Falshood; for this City could not be rebellious in old Time, being subject to none; till in latter Times it was conquered by *Nebuchadnezzar*; against whom they rebelled.

Ver. 16. *We certify the King, that if this City be builded again, and the Walls thereof set up, by this Means thou shalt have no Portion on this Side the River.* This was a most groundless Suggestion, that they should either be able to conquer all the neighbouring Countries, as far as *Euphrates*, or draw them all into a Rebellion with them against the King.

Ver. 17. *Then sent the King an Answer unto Rehum the Chancellor, and to Shimshai the Scribe, and to the rest of their Companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the River, Peace, and at such a Time.* This was a Matter of such Concern, that the King dispatched a speedy Answer to be communicated to all the People mentioned, *ver. 9, 10.*

Ver. 18. *The Letter which ye sent unto us, hath been plainly read before me.* It was read, in all Likelihood, before the King in Council.

Ver. 19. *And I commanded, and Search hath been made,* In the publick Records. See *chap. v. 17. vi. 1, 2. Esther* ii. 23. vi. 1.

And it is found, that this City of old Time hath made Insurrection against Kings, and that Rebellion and Sedition have been made therein. One Instance or two of it in latter Times served to fasten this odious Character upon them; as if they had been always guilty of these Crimes.

Ver. 20. *There have been mighty Kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all Countries beyond the River;* Such indeed were *David* and *Solomon*; who, as their Records shewed, ruled over all Countries on this Side *Euphrates*.

And Toll, Tribute, and Custom was paid unto them. As now they were to the King of *Persia*; which seemed to justify what these People suggested in their Letter, *ver. 16.* only they wanted such mighty Kings as they then had, and were never likely to have such again.

Ver. 21. *Give ye now Commandment to cause these Men to cease, and that this City be not builded,* He gave no Order about the Temple, but only about the City; which he was made to believe they were fortifying.

Until another Commandment shall be given from me. He kept his Ears open, like a good King, to further Information; which if he should have different

different from theirs, he might give other Orders. For this was not a Law of the *Medes* and *Persians* that could not be revoked; but only an Edict, depending wholly upon the Will and Pleasure of the King, which he might have Reason to alter hereafter.

Ver. 22. *Take heed now, that ye fail not to do this: why should Damage grow to the hurt of the Kings?*] By their Negligence, if they permitted them to proceed to fortify *Jerusalem*. It is very observable, that in neither of their Letters, nor in the King's Answer, there is not one Word of the Command which *Cyrus* gave; nor any thing said of the building of the Temple; which was the great Thing in which they were employed; and the building of which could be no Damage to the King. But tho' we do not know by what Trick the Decree of *Cyrus* was now smothered, yet their Silence about it proves, (as the fore-named Dr. *Alix* suggests to me) that this Complaint was moved neither in the Time of *Darius* I. who lived in the Court of *Cyrus*, and married his Daughter, nor of *Xerxes* his Son, as *Josephus* thinks, (taking *Xerxes* for *Artaxerxes*) but in the Beginning of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*; who began to reign seventy one Years after the first of *Cyrus*, in which the Edict was published.

Ver. 23. *Now when the Copy of King Artaxerxes Letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the Scribe, and their Companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews,*] So they of the Captivity are now called, though there were many *Israelites* among them; because they chiefly consisted of the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. But it must be noted, that *all Israel* (as this Author speaks, *ch. ii. ult.*) are included under the Name of *Jews*. For Liberty was granted to them all by the Edict of *Cyrus*, (which cannot be noted too often) in Virtue of which they might return when they pleased. But the holy Writers mention only those who returned in a Body; after which the Prophets admonish those who remained in Captivity to return to their own Land; as we see in the Book of *Zechariah*.

And made them to cease by Force and Power.] They threatened, I suppose, to force them to desist, if they did not presently obey the King's Order: Which was only that the City should not be built; but the Temple being a Part of it, they would have it understood, that it was comprehended in this Order.

Ver. 24. *Then ceased the Work of the House of God, which is at Jerusalem.*] It did not quite cease; for when the *Jews* understood that this Edict did not prohibit the building of the Temple, but only of the City, they went on with their Work again without asking any Leave; since they knew *Artaxerxes* did not forbid it. But it went on so slowly, that in a Manner it ceased, till the Beginning of the Reign of *Darius*, as it here follows.

So it ceased unto the second Year of the Reign of Darius King of Persia.] They that take *Darius Notus* to be here meant, are pressed with very great Difficulties. For from the first Year of *Cyrus*, who gave Order for the building of the Temple, till the sixth Year of *Darius Notus*, in which they suppose it was finished; there were at least an hundred and thirteen

Years, as *Scaliger* and *Calvisius* make Account; but as others think, an hundred and seventeen; and, according to *Cocceius*, an hundred forty and two. Now all this Time *Zerubbabel* was in the Government of *Judæa*, and *Jeshua* in the High-Priesthood; but so long an Authority in Church or State was never heard of in any Age; and they must have lived some time before and after, and consequently they must be of a vast Age: And therefore so long a Space was not between the Beginning and the Conclusion of this Work. Besides, *Haggai* supposes (*ch. ii. 4.*) that some remembered the Glory of the first House, and compared it with the Glory of the second: Which if this was in the sixth Year of *Darius Notus*, they must be at least an hundred and fourscore Year old; which is not likely. Several Solutions are given to this, which do not satisfy those who believe *Darius Hystaspis* is here meant; whose second Year was the eighteenth after the first of *Cyrus*, as *Huetius* reckons. And this is the most ancient Opinion. But it is built only upon the Authority of *Josephus*, who was followed by many after the second-Century; but before, they took this *Darius* to be *Darius Ochus*, as Dr. *Alix* assures me, who thinks the long Life of *Zerubbabel* and *Jeshua* is no Objection against it; but is to be look'd upon as an extraordinary Effect of the divine Goodness, for the Re-establishment of the Commonwealth, and of the Worship of God: As the Life of *Jehoiada* was prolonged for the same Reason, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 15.

C H A P. V.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN the Prophets, *Haggai the Prophet, and Zechariah the Son of Iddo,*] The Grand-Child of *Iddo*; for his Father's Name was *Berachiah*.

Prophefied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the Name of the God of Israel, even unto them.] Or rather against them, as the Hebrew Words may be interpreted: For they reproved them because they did not build the Temple. They both prophefied in the second Year of *Darius*, as appears by the Beginning of their Prophecies; one in the sixth Month, the other in the eighth. This second Year of *Darius*, as Dr. *Alix* observes to me, was a Sabbatic Year, from which there were seven Weeks, or forty nine Years, as well for the rebuilding of the Walls of *Jerusalem*, which was in the twentieth of *Artaxerxes*, as for settling a right Policy in Church and State, which was finished by *Nehemiah*, the 32d Year of *Artaxerxes*, which was also a Sabbatic Year. And from this second of *Darius*, whom God gave Order by these Precepts to set upon this Work, he thinks, is the true Beginning of the sixty two Weeks, (spoken of, *Daniel ix.*) till the Appearing of the *Messiah*.

Ver. 2. *Then rose up Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the Son of Jozadak, and began to build the House of God which is at Jerusalem:*] It had been begun a good while ago, but went on very slowly, till these great Men, excited by the Prophets, set the Work forward.

And with them were the Prophets of God helping them.] Calling upon them to labour stren-

nuously in the Work; for God was with them, to protect, defend, and prosper them, *Haggai* i. 13, 14. ii. 4.

Ver. 3. *At the same Time came to them Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, and Shethar-boznai, and their Companions,*] These were Men in Authority under the King of *Persia*, who managed the publick Affairs in these Countries; but seem to have been of a better Spirit than *Rehum*, and the rest mentioned in the foregoing Chapter; who, it is likely, were either dead, or put out of their Places by this new King.

And said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this House, and to make up this Wall?] They fairly question them by what Authority they built the Temple, and the Wall about it; for they do not mean the Wall of the City, which was not building.

Ver. 4. *Then said we unto them after this Manner, What are the Names of the Men that make this Building?*] Many take these to be still the Words of *Tatnai*, and his Companions. But it is more natural to take them for the Answer of the *Jews*; who not only told them by what Authority they built the Temple, but also gave them the Names of those, who were the great Undertakers of the Work; after which it is likely they enquired, v. 10. But then the Word *What*, is not the Note of an Interrogation, but is to be translated, *We said unto them after this Manner, What were the Names, &c.* From which Place *Huetius* argues, that he who wrote this Chapter, was now present when this Question was asked, and Answer made to it; and therefore *Ezra* was not the Writer; for this was in the second Year of *Darius*, and he did not come to *Jerusalem* till the seventh Year of *Artaxerxes*, called *Longimanus*, ch. vii. 1, 8.

Ver. 5. *But the Eye of their God was upon the Elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the Matter came to Darius;*] By the Favour and good Providence of God, the King's Ministers in those Parts became their Friends, so far, as not to prohibit them to go on with their Work; but referred the Matter to the Consideration of *Darius* himself; to whom they make a very fair and honest Report of the Case.

And then they returned Answer by Letter concerning this Matter.] The Matter being laid before *Darius*, they received Answer from him by Letter, what should be done in it.

Ver. 6. *The Copy of the Letter that Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, and Shethar-boznai, and his Companions the Apharsachites, which were on this Side the River, sent unto Darius the King.*] The *Apharsachites* were one of the Nations mentioned before in the former Letter to *Artaxerxes*, ch. iv. 9. of which perhaps these two great Men were.

Ver. 7. *They sent a Letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the King, all Peace.*] They seem to write with greater Affection than the former did, wishing the King all Prosperity and Happiness, which the other did not, but only called themselves his Servants, ch. iv. 11.

Ver. 8. *Be it known unto the King, that we went into the Province of Judea, to the House of the great God,*] So the *Jews* spake, to distinguish their God from all others, who were the Gods

only of small Countries, every one of which had their particular Gods.

Which is builded with great Stones,] The *Talmudists*, *Jarchi* and *Kimchi*, and others translate it *Marble Stones*, and the Seventy choice Stones.

And Timber is laid in the Walls, and this Work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their Hands.] It was advanced so far, and such Diligence was used, that if a Stop were not put to it, it would be speedily finished.

Ver. 9. *Then asked we those Elders, and said unto them, Who commanded you to build this House, and to make up these Walls?*

Ver. 10. *And we asked their Names also to certify thee, that we might write the Names of the Men that were the chief of them.*] They made a very diligent Enquiry, that they might give the King a perfect Account of the Matter, and he might the better judge of it.

Ver. 11. *And thus they returned us Answer, saying, We are the Servants of the God of Heaven and Earth, and build the House that was builded these many Years ago, which a great King of Israel builded and set up.*] They own their Religion which was of very ancient Standing; their God having been worshipped many Ages ago in this House, which was built by *Solomon*.

Ver. 12. *But after that our Fathers had provoked the God of Heaven unto Wrath, he gave them into the Hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon the Chaldean; who destroyed this House, and carried the People away into Babylon.*] They give them a short Account how it came to be destroyed for their Sins, and how they were punished on that Account.

Ver. 13. *But in the first Year of Cyrus, the King of Babylon, the same King Cyrus made a Decree to build this House of God.*

Ver. 14. *And the Vessels also of Gold and Silver of the House of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the Temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the Temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the King take out of the Temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one whose Name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made Governor.*

Ver. 15. *And said unto him, Take these Vessels, go, carry them into the Temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the House of God be builded in his Place.*

Ver. 16. *Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the Foundation of the House of God which is in Jerusalem. And since that Time even until now, hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished.*] These last Words shew, it had gone on very slowly and negligently ever since the first of *Cyrus*, they being in a poor Condition, and hindered in the Work by the *Samaritans*; after which the People grew sluggish, being set upon building their own Houses, which they carried on with greater Earnestness, than the House of God, as *Haggai* reproves them. However, in these last Verses, the *Jews* gave *Tatnai* a faithful Account of the whole Matter; and he very worthily represented it to the King, as they informed him, without any Addition or Diminution of his own. For he did not accuse them of building the Walls of *Jerusalem*; which shews, he and his Companions were not their Enemies; but impartially wrote what they affirmed to be true.

Ver.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore, if it seem good to the King, let there be search made in the Kings Treasure House, which is there at Babylon,] Where the Records of the Kingdom were kept very carefully, as Treasures use to be.*

Whether it be so that a Decree was made of Cyrus the King, to build this House of God at Jerusalem, and let the King send his Pleasure to us concerning this Matter.] It is likely the Elders desired the Records might be searched and examined, whether they said true or no; and accordingly the Governors reported their Desires to the King, as a speedy Way to be satisfied about this Matter. For these do not seem to be like the Samaritans in the foregoing Chapter, who endeavoured to obstruct the Work, but were only desirous to be informed of the Truth of what the Jews pretended, that so the Building of the Temple might either be permitted or prohibited, according as the King found the Grant of Cyrus to be.

C H A P. VI.

Ver. 1. **T**hen Darius the King made a Decree; and search was made in the House of the Rolls, where the Treasures were laid up in Babylon.] In the House where the Records of the Kingdom were kept; but by what follows, it appears that in Babylon they found nothing.

Ver. 2. *And there was found at Achmetha, in the Palace that is in the Province of the Medes, a Roll, and therein was a Record thus written:]* They searched therefore at Achmetha, which was afterward called Ecbatana, where the Kings of Persia sometimes kept their Court; and there was found a Volume concerning the Affairs of Judæa, wherein was the following Record. This argued a great Goodness in Darius, that he did not presently decree against them, because nothing that they alledged was found in Babylon; but caused a search to be made in another Place, where he knew Records were preserved.

Ver. 3. *In the first Year of Cyrus the King,] This perhaps was the Inscription of the following Memorial.*

The same Cyrus the King made a Decree concerning the House of God at Jerusalem, Let the House be builded, the Place where they offered Sacrifices, and let the Foundations thereof be strongly laid, the height thereof threescore Cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore Cubits:] Or, rather, the length thereof, as these last Words may be translated. They had Liberty to make it of these Dimensions if they pleased, but no bigger: And these exceeded the Proportions of Solomon's Temple, if we suppose it to have been thirty Cubits in height, except the Porch, which was an hundred and twenty. But I have shewn elsewhere, that it is probable all the Temple of Solomon was in length an hundred and twenty Cubits, and this House was but half so high. This Josephus saith, who saw this second Temple, Lib. xv. Archaeolog. Cap. 14. Ἐν δ' αὖτῳ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος αἰς ὕψος ἐξήκοντα πήχας, &c. It wanted (speaking of this Temple) to make it great, sixty Cubits in height;

V O L. II.

for so much higher was the first Temple which Solomon built.

Ver. 4. *With three Rows of great Stones, and a Row of new Timber; and let the Expences be given out of the Kings House.]* He ordered it to be built at his own Charge, for so he saith God commanded him, ch. i. 2. *God hath charged me to build him an House at Jerusalem.* Yet we do not find that the Jews made use of his Bounty, as Pellicanus observes, because they would not provoke too much the Envy of the Samaritans, who were angry at his Kindness to them. And therefore they carried on the Work at their own Cost, till Darius now commanded they should have what they desired out of his Revenue, to finish what they had begun.

Ver. 5. *And also let the golden and silver Vessels of the House of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the Temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again to the Temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his Place, and place them in the House of God.]* Thus far the Decree of Cyrus is recited; which justified the Truth of all the Allegations of the Jews, in the foregoing Chapter. Now follows the Decree of Darius thereupon.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore, Tatnai, Governor beyond the River, Shethar-boznai, and your Companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the River,] It is most likely that he set down in his Letter to these Men, the forementioned Decree of Cyrus, as it was found in the Records, and then gave the following Command.*

Be ye far from thence:] Come not near Jerusalem to give them any Hindrance or Disturbance.

Ver. 7. *Let the Work of this House of God alone,] Obstruct not the Work, but rather further it.*

Let the Governor of the Jews, and the Elders of the Jews, build this House of God in his place.] In the Place where it stood before. Zerubbabel is constantly called the Governor of the Jews, never their King, Haggai i. 1, 14. and ii. 2, 21. and so some of his Successors, Malachi i. 9. For in Babylon, as Josephus relates, he was σωματοφύλαξ a Keeper of the King's Body, and τῶν αἰχμαλώτων Ἰσραηλίων ἡγεμὼν, the Captain of the Captive Jews; who in one Word was called Αἰχμαλωτάρχας. Therefore he was appointed by Cyrus, and afterwards by Darius, to govern the Province of Judæa in the King's Name, and at his Charge to see the Temple built at Jerusalem. But learned Men give no Credit to what Josephus says of his great Office in Babylon.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, I make a Decree, what ye shall do to the Elders of these Jews,] Whose Names they had given in to him, ch. 5. 10.*

For the building of this House of God:] As he had ordered they should not be hindered, so he made a further Order, that they should give them Assistance in what they were about.

That of the Kings Goods, even of the Tribute beyond the River, forthwith Expences be given unto these Men, that they be not hindered.] That the Work might not stop for want of Money to go forward, which he ordered to be paid them without Delay.

T t t t 2

Ver.

Ver. 9. *And that which they have need of, both young Bulls, and Rams, and Lambs, for the Burnt-offerings of the God Heaven,]* So he had learn'd to call the God of Israel, after the Example of Cyrus, who acknowledges God had made him so great, as he had Darius.

Wheat, Salt, Wine, and Oil,] For Meat-offerings to attend upon the Burnt-offerings.

According to the Appointment of the Priests which are at Jerusalem,] This was a great Honour done to God's Ministers, who might have whatsoever they desired for his Service.

Let it be given them Day by Day without fail:] That the Morning and Evening Burnt-sacrifices might never fail to be offered every Day.

Ver. 10. *That they may offer Sacrifices of sweet Savours unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the Life of the King, and of his Sons.]* From this Place principally Mr. Mede proves at large that Sacrifices were a Rite of Supplication unto God; such ones namely whereby the Suppliant came not with a naked Petition, but presented something unto his God, whereby to find Favour in his Sight, and obtain his Petition: Whence we find Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, where they pitched their Tents, to have built an Altar also (which was a Place for Sacrifice) and there called upon the Name of the LORD. And by this Place it appears, that the Sacrifices and Oblations presented by Gentiles were not refused by the Jews, when they desired their Prayers to God for them. The Hebrew Doctors indeed say, that all such Sacrifices were Eucharistical, not Hilestical, that is, Sacrifices of Thanksgiving or Acknowledgment to God (being Burnt-offerings,) not Sacrifices of Expiation, or Sin-offerings. So Maimonides in his Treatise of Sacrifices, *All the Eucharistical Sacrifices of the Gentiles were Burnt-offerings.* There is a memorable Passage in Josephus (Lib. ii. De Bello Judaico, Cap. 31.) concerning Eleazar the Priest, who being admonished to admit the Sacrifices and Oblations of the Gentiles, acknowledged that their Ancestors adorned the Temple with Gifts offered by the Gentiles, always accepting τῶν ἑξωθεν ἱερῶν δῶρεα καὶ θυσίας, the Gifts and Sacrifices of external Nations.

The King and his Sons.] Here it must be noted, that Darius the First had no Sons, but Darius the Second had, viz. Artaxerxes Mnemon, and Cyrus the younger, who were great Men, and reigned in some Manner with him. Artaxerxes Mnemon (as Dr. Alix makes account) was thirty five Years old in the second Year of Darius; and Cyrus (who was slain in a Battle against his Brother) was a little younger.

Ver. 11. *Also I have made a Decree, that whosoever shall alter this Word, let Timber be pulled down from his House, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon,]* To make the Decree more valid and better observed, he added this Penalty; that if any acted contrary to it, a Beam should be taken out of his own House, and being set up, he should be hanged thereon. But Lud. de Dieu observes, that there is no Construction in these Words, which we render, *being set up*; therefore he would have them translated after the LXX. and standing, *let him be beat upon it*; whipp'd, as we say, at

a Post, as the Manner was among the Persians and other Nations. Only among the Jews they that were beaten did not stand, but lay down, Deut. xxv. 2. But if a greater Punishment be here meant, then he makes the first Words refer to the Wood, and the latter to the Man, in this Manner, *and from above, let it fall upon him.* That is, the Stake being lifted up, shall be struck into his Body, and come out at his Fundament; which was a cruel Punishment among the Eastern People, and still continued there.

And let his House be made a Dunghil for this.] The pulling down of a Beam from his House, supposes the pulling down of the House, which he orders should not be built again, but the Place where it stood be made a Dunghil. Thus the Romans pulled down the Houses of very wicked Men for their greater Disgrace, of Sp. Cassius, for Instance, and of Ovidius Pollio.

Ver. 12. *And the God who hath caused his Name to dwell there, destroy all Kings and People that shall put to their Hand, to alter and to destroy this House of God, which is at Jerusalem:]* He was touched with such a Sense of the Greatness of the God of the Jews, that he prays, he who had all Power in Heaven and Earth, would not only punish all those Kings over whom he had no Power, (not being his Subjects) who went about to obstruct this Work, but destroy both them and their People.

I Darius have made a Decree, let it be done with speed.] He concludes as he began, that forthwith this Decree should be executed, ver. 8.

Ver. 13. *Then Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, Shethar-boznai, and their Companions, according to that which Darius the King had sent, so they did speedily.]* They were as punctual in executing his Decrees as he desired, and that without any Delay.

Ver. 14. *And the Elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered thro' the prophesying of Haggai the Prophet, and Zechariah the Son of Iddo:]* Who directed and encouraged them in their Work; representing to them, it is likely, the wonderful Goodness of God, who had inclined the Heart of the King of Persia to be so highly favourable to them.

And they builded and finished it, according to the Commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the Commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes King of Persia.] If this Darius was he called Hystaspis, then it was Artaxerxes Longimanus his Successor that is here meant; who tho' he found the Temple built, yet sent Ezra to beautify it, and to see Things done there according to their Law, ch. vii. 12, 21, 27. But some think him to be Artaxerxes Mnemon, who reigned with his Father many Years, and lived till he was ninety four Years old. Plut.

Ver. 15. *And this House was finished on the third Day of the Month Adar, which was in the sixth Year of the Reign of Darius the King.]* Now they did in four Years more than they had done in many Years before. For, partly by their own Poverty, and partly by the Corruption of the Courtiers of Persia, who hindered

necef-

necessary Supplies; and partly by the Envy of the Samaritans, who retarded them by their false Accusations, and by their Interest in the Governors of Syria; and partly by the Sluggishness of the Jews, and their Inclination to mind their own private Interest more than the publick Good, the Work went on so slowly, that not only the Prophets reprehended them for it, but God punish'd them severely by Scarcity of Provision, as we read in the Prophet Haggai. But now, by the Favour of this King, and by the Zeal of God's Prophets, it went on a-pace, and was speedily finished.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Israel, the Priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the Children of the Captivity, kept the Dedication of this House of God with Joy,*] By the Children of Israel are to be understood not only the two Tribes of Judah and Benjamin (who were the Chief) but all those of other Tribes, many of which from the Time of Cyrus to the second of Darius, were come to their own Country, tho' we have not a particular Account of their Names; this appears from the next Verse. All these, together with the Priests and Levites, agreed to dedicate this House with festival Joy: Thus the Temple at first was dedicated, 1 Kings viii. 2. 2 Chron. vii. 4, &c. That is, after it was built, being designed only for sacred Uses, now they shewed by an Example how it should be used, which is the proper and simple Sense of the Word *dedicate*, as Selden explains it, Lib. iii. de Synedr. Cap. xiii. Sect. 5. But the Hebrew Doctors observe, that by these Sacrifices now offered, there was no new Sanctity given to the Place, but the old only restored.

Ver. 17. *And offered at the Dedication of this House of God, an hundred Bullocks, two hundred Rams, four hundred Lambs;*] An Hecatomb was the noblest Sacrifice among the Heathen, of which we find often mention in their Books; and with that the Jews began the Dedication of the Temple; to which they made many additional Offerings, some of which were Peace-offerings, on which they feasted, as the hundred Bullocks, I suppose, were whole Burnt-offerings.

And for a Sin-offering for all Israel, twelve He-goats, according to the Number of the Tribes of Israel.] For it appears by many Places before-recited, that tho' the ten Tribes were carried captive by Salmanasser, yet many of them remained in their Country, and were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, together with Judah and Benjamin, with whom they returned out of Babylon; as many others of the ten Tribes did, who were carried away at the taking of Samaria. See Chapter the Second of this Book, v. 70. and 2 Chron. xxxi. 5, 10, 11. xxxiv. 7, 9. xxxv. 3, 17. Ezra viii. 35. Acts xxvi. 7.

Ver. 18. *And they set the Priests in their Divisions, and the Levites in their Courses, for the Service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the Book of Moses.*] Where Directions are given for their Service, Numb. iii. 6. viii. 9, 10.

Ver. 19. *And the Children of the Captivity kept the Passover, upon the fourteenth Day of the*

first Month.] As was enjoined, Exodus xii. 6. The Jews had the free Exercise of their Religion in Babylon (as I shall observe more largely afterward) where they circumcised their Children, and also made Profelytes; but the Children of the Captivity signified those who were come back from it, and eat the Passover, which they could not have done if they had not been circumcised.

Ver. 20. *For the Priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the Passover for all the Children of the Captivity, and for their Brethren the Priests, and for themselves.*] They had time to purify themselves between the Day wherein the Temple was perfected, and the Day wherein this Feast was to be kept, there being above a Month between.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Israel, which were come again out of Captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them, from the Filthiness of the Heathen of the Land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat,*] That is, all Profelytes, who had entirely made themselves subject to the Law of Moses; for others might not eat of it, but they might, Exodus xii. 48, 49. Now, as Pellicanus observes, there were many Profelytes who quite forsook their heathenish Religion, and were brought to the Knowledge and Worship of the true God, by the Favour of Cyrus and Darius Kings of Persia: They had kept the Passover before this, being in the Place which God chose, and having an Altar where they might sacrifice; but it was not a quiet and settled Time; and they had much Occasion to be among the Heathen; and so, it is likely, could not easily purify themselves to eat of it, as they did now.

Ver. 22. *And kept the Feast of unleavened Bread seven Days with Joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the Heart of the King of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their Hands in the Work of the House of God, the God of Israel.*] God filled their Hearts with Joy, by turning the Heart of the King, who now reigned over all the Kingdoms, which were formerly under the Power of the Assyrians, who had grievously oppressed them, as the Persians who came in their stead now highly favoured them; who having conquered Babylon, were called the Kings of Assyria: For we find in these Books, the King of Persia, after that Conquest, is called by the Name of the King of Babylon. See Nehemiah xiii. 6. as the same King of Persia is here called the King of Assyria. For the Kings formerly called by these Names, were possessed of vast Dominions over many large Provinces, which the Persian Kings enjoying, they retained the ancient Names of the former Kings. For, as Job. Vorstius observes, in his *Dissertatio de IV Monarchiis*, Sect. ix. the Kingdom of Babylon was not extinguished by little and little, but all at once: Cyrus possessed himself of it intirely, simul & semel; and adding a vast Dominion to the small one he had before, was called the King of those Dominions which he conquered.

C H A P. VII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW after these Things, in the Reign of Artaxerxes King of Persia,] The same Artaxerxes, I suppose, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 14. But R. Solomon, and Aben Ezra, fancy he was Darius before-named.

Ezra the Son of Seraiah, the Son of Azariah, the Son of Hilkiab,] He was descended from Seraiah, but not immediately begotten by him; for Seraiah perished when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, 2 Kings xxv. 18, 21. at which Time Ezra, it is likely, was not in being; but he was his Grandson, or great Grandson, and his Descent is mentioned from him, because he was an eminent Person, who flourished before the Destruction of the Temple, whereas his Father or Grandfather lived obscurely in their Captivity. See 1 Chron. vi. 15.

Ver. 2. The Son of Shallum, the Son of Zadok, the Son of Abitub,

Ver. 3. The Son of Amariah, the Son of Azariah, the Son of Meraioth,] In this Genealogy there are six Generations omitted, between Azariah and Meraioth (as before there were some between Seraiah and Ezra) which are to be supplied out of 1 Chron. vi. 7, &c. Which Kimchi, as I there observed, thinks was done for Brevity Sake: For Ezra being Author of that Book which was written first, and then of this, might think it needless to repeat all that he had there said at large.

Ver. 4. The Son of Zerabiah, the Son of Uzzi, the Son of Bukki,

Ver. 5. The Son of Abishua, the Son of Phinehas, the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron the chief Priest:] See 1 Chron. vi. 4, 5.

Ver. 6. This Ezra went up from Babylon,] Not only by the King's Leave, and his Commission, but with great Authority, as appears from the End of this Verse, and from v. 25.

And he was a ready Scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given:] He calls himself a Scribe (as Buxtorf notes in his Tiberias) not from writing and describing, but from declaring and explicating those Things that are contained in the Scripture. For as Sopher signifies a Book, so Sopher signifies one skilful and learned in that Book, an Interpreter and Teacher out of it. And there being no Book comparable to the Book of the Law, therefore Sopher became a Name of great Dignity, and signified one that taught God's Law, and expounded it to his People. Thus in the New Testament Γραμματεῖς, the Scribes, were those that instructed the People. For when our Saviour is said to have taught them as one having Authority, and not as the Scribes, it plainly shews that they were Teachers, tho' not with such Authority. See Jerem. viii. 8. where the Word Scribe is thus used.

And he calls himself a ready Scribe, because he was expert in the Law, and understood it thoroughly, both in all Things belonging to the Priesthood, and to the Civil Power; in which he was so well versed, that he could give a ready Account of any Part of it. And it is thought

by some, he gathered together the most perfect Copies of the Law, and put out an accurate Edition of it, with all the prophetic Books, and such Poems as had any sacred Authority among them, adding the History of following Times. But Josephus saith nothing of it, and therefore it is look'd upon by others as a Jewish Chimæra, who attribute many other Things to him without Ground.

And the King granted him all his Request,] Some think to rebuild Jerusalem, of which there is no mention any where; therefore he only granted him Power, as he desired, to do such Things as are mentioned below, ver. 14, 15, &c.

According to the Hand of the LORD his God upon him.] For God was so favourable to him, as to incline the King to give a gracious Answer to his Petition. And indeed, these Kings of Persia were so exceeding kind to the Jews, that in a grateful Remembrance of the Favour they shewed them, in permitting them to build the Temple again, and assisting them in it, they caused a Figure of the City and Palace of Shushan (where the Kings of Persia resided) to be made in Brass, in the East-gate of the Temple, which looked towards Persia; as we read in the Talmud, in the Treatise called Middoth.

Ver. 7. And there went up some of the Children of Israel,] Of the ten Tribes, or such Jews as remained still in Babylon, after Leave given them by Cyrus to return into their own Country.

And of the Priests, and the Levites, and the Singers, and the Porters, and the Netbinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh Year of Artaxerxes the King.] This was the second Company that went up to Jerusalem, consisting of such-like Persons as went up first with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and others, ch. ii. 2, 70. For hearing the Temple was rebuilt, and the Worship of God restored, we may very well think many went along with Ezra, who had not such a strong Motive to go in the first of Cyrus.

Ver. 8. And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth Month, which was in the seventh Year of the King.

Ver. 9. For upon the first Day of the first Month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first Day of the fifth Month came he to Jerusalem,] On the first Day of the first Month they went from Babylon to the River Abava, where they spent three Days in taking a View of the People that accompanied him, chap. viii. 15. After eight Days more, Part of which they had spent in Fasting and Prayer, they went forward, ch. viii. 21, 22, 31.

According to the good Hand of his God upon him.] He had great Reason to acknowledge the Favour of God to them in conducting them safe to Jerusalem; for it was a long Way thither, and a difficult Journey, and they had many Impediments (going with Wives and Children, Flocks, and Herds) and were not without Enemies to way-lay them, whom he boasted he did not fear, but relied on the Divine Protection, as he told the King, c. viii. 22.

Ver. 10. For Ezra had prepared his Heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel Statutes and Judgments.] He was

was intent upon this Business, on which he had set his Heart, as we speak, bending his Thoughts and Studies this Way; for so the Hebrew Word *Cun* (which we translate *prepare*) signifies, to establish, confirm, and make things fixed and immovable: And first, he set himself to *seek the Law of the LORD*, that is, to enquire into it, and search after the Will of God therein contained, that he might understand it himself; and then, like a good Man, he set his Heart to do what God commanded, and put in Practice what he knew to be his Duty; whereby he was the better qualified to teach others what he knew and did himself, which was the next Thing which he diligently attended. This was the right Method of doing good, in which *Nehemiah* tells us he proceeded, *chap. viii.* Beginning. Some think Statutes and Judgments are the same Thing, comprehending all the Precepts of *Moses*, but others take them to have a distinct Meaning; the first signifying the ceremonial Law about the Divine Worship; and the second, the moral Precepts concerning common Honesty and civil Life.

Ver. 11. *Now this is the Copy of the Letter that the King Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the Priest, the Scribe, even a Scribe of the Words of the Commandments of the LORD, and of his Statutes to Israel.* Here *Ezra* declares that he was no ordinary Doctor of the Law, but of eminent Rank among them, who had studied the Law thoroughly, and was able in every Case to determine what was to be done. Or, (as some understand the latter Part of this Verse) he was perfectly skilled in the Words or Language wherein the Law was written, (which in the Captivity many perhaps had forgotten) and in the Sense of every Law. But this, I think, is not to be supposed, that they had forgotten their own Language.

Ver. 12. *Artaxerxes King of Kings;* For he had several Kings who were subject to him.

Unto Ezra the Priest, a Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven; So *Ezra*, I suppose, was wont to be styled by the Jews, who never spake of him, but as a Man of greater Dignity and Honour than others.

Perfect Peace, and at such a Time. On such a Year and Day, as was mentioned in the Date of the Letter.

Ver. 13. *I make a Decree, that all they of the People of Israel, and of his Priests, and Levites in my Realm, which are minded of their own free Will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.* None might leave his Country without the King's Permission, which he here gives to all the Jewish Nation who were so disposed.

Ver. 14. *Forasmuch as thou art sent of the King, and of his seven Counsellors;* By whose Advice this Decree being made, it gave it the greater Authority; for these were the principal Men of the Kingdom, as appears from the first of *Ester*, *ver. 14.*

To enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the Law of thy God; By this Commission he gave him Authority to make Inquisition in *Judea*, whether every Thing there was done conformably to the Law of *Moses*: That is, he granted to the Jewish Nation an *αὐτονομία*,

αὐτονομία, a Liberty to live by their own Laws, and to judge all Causes according to them; and in the Conclusion, granted them also an *αὐτοδίκη*; a Power to sentence Men according to their own Law, *ver. 25, 26.*

Which is in thine Hand: He entrusted *Ezra* with this great Power of being supreme Inquisitor and Judge, because he was so very well skilled in the Law (which is meant by having it in his Hand) which he had in such Readiness; and was so very conversant in it, that he was able presently to determine and judge whether it were observed.

Ver. 15. *And to carry the Silver and the Gold; which the King and his Counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose Habitation is in Jerusalem.* This is an Argument that they had an high Opinion of the God of *Israel*, and desired his Favour; tho' they did not worship him alone; but imagined other Gods had some Power, tho' not so great as he.

Ver. 16. *And all the Silver and Gold that thou canst find in the Province of Babylon; with the Freewill-offering of the People, and of the Priests offering willingly for the House of their God, which is in Jerusalem:* He gave them Leave to carry away all the Money they could procure (so the Word we translate *find* is used in other Places) in his own Country of *Babylon*; as well as what the Jews, who had a Mind to stay still there; should offer for the Service of the Temple at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 17. *That thou mayest buy speedily with this Money, Bullocks; Rams, Lambs; with their Meat-offerings, and their Drink-offerings; and offer them upon the Altar of the House of your God, which is in Jerusalem.* That they might pray for the Prosperity of the King and of his Sons, as *Darius* ordered, *ch. vi. 9, 10.*

Ver. 18. *And whatsoever shall seem good to thee; and to thy Brethren, to do with the rest of the Silver and Gold, that do after the Will of your God.* He authorizes *Ezra* to take other Priests to his Assistance, in disposing of the Money that was not laid out in Sacrifices; only he would have it employed to some sacred Use.

Ver. 19. *The Vessels also that are given thee; for the Service of the House of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem.* He speaks of him, as if he thought him a particular God, but afterwards speaks of him as the God of Heaven, as he had done before, *ver. 12.* which is a Sign he took him to be the most High God, who had a special Affection for *Jerusalem*, because he was there worshipped.

Ver. 20. *And whatsoever more shall be needful for the House of thy God, which thou shalt have Occasion to bestow;* Either for the Reparation (if any was wanting) or for the Adorning of the House. See *ver. 27.*

Bestow it out of the Kings Treasure-house. Out of his Exchequer, as we now speak.

Ver. 21. *And I, even I Artaxerxes the King, do make a Decree to all the Treasurers which are beyond the River;* All the Receivers, and other Officers employed about the King's Revenue.

That whatsoever Ezra the Priest, the Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven, shall require of you,

you, it be done speedily;] This was a wonderful large Concession, that he should have whatsoever he desired; and that they should not make him attend upon them, and wait long for it, but furnish him immediately.

Ver. 22. *Unto an hundred Talents of Silver, and to an hundred Measures of Wheat, and to an hundred Baths of Wine, and to an hundred Baths of Oil, and Salt without prescribing how much.*] He limits all the other Expences, except Salt; without which no Sacrifice could be offered; and therefore since he would not have any Sacrifice hindered, he did not prescribe any Measure of that; but left them to take as much as they found necessary.

Ver. 23. *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done, for the House of the God of Heaven:]* Here *Jacobus Capellus* cries out in a Kind of Rapture, *O verba literis aureis regum Palatiis inscribenda, atque adeò stylo adamantino fidelium omnium animis insculpenda!* O Words to be written upon the Palaces of Kings in golden Letters, and engraven on the Minds of all the Faithful with a Style of Adamant! For they express an exceeding great Sense of God, and of his supreme Authority; and the Regard that is due from the greatest Kings and Potentates to his most sacred Commands. *Hist. sacra & exotica, ad A. M. 3543.* The like is not easy to be found any where.

For why should there be Wrath against the Realm of the King and his Sons?] As he was afraid there would be, if the Worship and Service of God was here neglected, thro' his Default: An Argument he was possessed with a greater Dread of God's just Displeasure, than the Kings of Judah themselves were generally before the Captivity: The Mention of the King and of his Sons, shews, that this agrees to *Artaxerxes Mnemon* exactly; but not to *Xerxes*, (who was in Greece in the seventh Year of his Reign) nor to *Longimanus*: But *Artaxerxes Mnemon* had then *Ochus* the Husband of *Esther*, who was a great Man, and some more: This Remark I owe to the most learned Dr. *Alix*.

Ver. 24. *Also we certify you, that touching any of the Priests and Levites, Singers, Porters, Netbinims, or Ministers of this House of God, it shall not be lawful to impose Toll, Tribute, or Custom upon them.*] The King's Revenue arose out of these three Imposts, as appears by *ch. iv. 13.* from all which Burdens, which were very great, the King freed every one of God's Ministers, that they might the more chearfully attend his Service: And this was confirmed by some succeeding Princes, as *Bertram* observes, *de Republica Jud. p. 171.* which the first Christian Kings piously imitated, as *J. Wolphius* notes, *That they who watched and prayed for the publick Good, might be free from all other Cares.*

Ver. 25. *And thou, Ezra, after the Wisdom of thy God, that is in thine Hand,*] According as the Law of God directed, in which he was very expert, *ver. 14.*

Set Magistrates and Judges, which may judge all the People that are beyond the River,] Such as *Moses* ordered, *Deut. xvi. 18.* Here seems to be the Original of the *Sanhedrin*, which continued but weakly till the Time of the *Maccabees*.

All such as know the Laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.] Men well acquainted with the Laws of God, who were able to instruct others that were ignorant. No Jewish King could have given more pious Instructions: And the same *Jacobus Capellus* in the Place above-named, thinks, that in this large Power granted to *Ezra*, there was comprehended sufficient Authority to build the Walls of *Jerusalem*: But as the King did not expressly mention it, so the Malignity of the Jews Enemies hindered it; and *Ezra* being now grown old, was unable to cope with them. But this is not a good Reason, for he lived thirteen Years after this, able to stand and read the Law from six to twelve of the Clock.

Ver. 26. *And whosoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King,*] By the Law of the King is meant this Decree, which was now made in Favour of the Jews; giving them Authority to execute their own Laws again. As for the Imperial Laws, *Ezra* had nothing to do with them, nor were the Jews to be governed by them, but by their own Laws; unless any Matters could not be determined by the Divine Laws; in that Case they were to be judged by the King's Law. So *Joh. Vorstius* understands these Words disjunctively (in his *Dissert. de Synedriis Hebr. Sect. 36.*) that they should act according to the Direction of the divine Law; or, if any thing fell out that could not be defined by that, then according to the Prescription of the Laws of the King.

Let Judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto Death,] The Romans never allowed the Jews the Power of Life and Death, which the Persians did. So it is commonly thought; but the contrary is plain from the Acts of the Apostles, which shew, they enjoyed that Power, by their stoning *St. Stephen*.

Or to Banishment, or to Confiscation of Goods, or to Imprisonment.] That Word which we translate *Banishment*, signifies in the Chaldees (as we note in the Margin of our Bibles) *rooting out*; and therefore is by some interpreted disinheriting, or excommunicating from their Society; so that he should be an Out-law, as we speak, the highest Degree of which was called *Shammatbāh*. And thus our Mr. *Thorndike* observes, that this *rooting out* is the same with that which in *ch. x. 8.* is called being *divided* or *separated* from the Congregation of the Captivity; being indeed a Kind of Temporal Out-lawry, unto which is joined Confiscation of Goods: And thus the greater Excommunication among Christians, is every where a Temporal Punishment; viz. in respect of some Temporal Punishment attending it in Christian States; which in Christianity is accidental, by an Act of those States; but in Judaism was essential, so long as those Temporal Advantages, which were essential Conditions of the Law, were not forfeited: And this without doubt is the same Punishment that is called *Putting out of the Synagogue*. See *Rights of the Church in a Christian State, p. 28.* and *Review, p. 58.* with *Grotius de Imper. Sum. Potest. Cap. ix.* I only add, that from such Sentence it was in vain for them to appeal to any of the King's Courts; for by this Decree all Mat-

ters were to be tried and finally judged by their own Law.

Ver. 27. *Blessed be the LORD God of our Fathers, which hath put such a Thing as this in the Kings Heart, to beautify the House of the LORD which is in Jerusalem:]* To be so liberal in his Gifts and Privileges, as is before expressed, ver. 15, 16, &c.

Ver. 28. *And hath extended Mercy unto me,]* These Words plainly shew, Ezra wrote this Part of this Book, if not the whole.

Before the King and his Counsellors, and before all the Kings mighty Princes:] By whose Advice and Consent the large Immunities before-mentioned were granted to the Jewish Nation.

And I was strengthened as the Hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel, chief Men to go up with me.] Whose Names follow in the next Chapter. The marvellous Kindness of the King in this Grant to Ezra, gave a great Authority to him; and moved several of the greatest Persons among the Jews still in Babylon, to resolve to accompany him to Jerusalem.

These two last Verses are evidently the Words of Ezra, acknowledging the divine Goodness to him, in giving him such Favour with the King; whose Words before are in the Syriack or Chaldee Language; but these are in the Hebrew.

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **T**hese are now the chief of their Fathers, and this is the Genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the Reign of Artaxerxes the King.] Whose Names he sets down to preserve their Memory to future Generations.

Ver. 2. *Of the Sons of Phinehas; Gershom: Of the Sons of Ithamar; Daniel:]* By the Sons, he means the Families of these two Persons; two of which he particularly names, Gershom, and Daniel: Not Daniel the Prophet, but some eminent Person of Ithamar's Family.

Of the Sons of David; Hattush.] His Family was so noble, because Christ was to spring from thence, that special Notice was taken of it.

Ver. 3. *Of the Sons of Shechaniah, of the Sons of Pharosh; Zechariah:]* This Shechaniah is said to be the Son of Pharosh, to distinguish him from another Shechaniah, mentioned ver. 5.

And with him] That is, with Zechariah.

Were reckoned by Genealogy of the Males an hundred and fifty.] It is not said, how many there were of the other Families; and we are not to think that none but Males went up out of this Family, and the rest that follow; for Mention is made of their little ones, ver. 21. who had Women, no doubt, to look after them.

Ver. 4. *Of the Sons of Pakath-moab; Elihoenai the Son of Zerabiah, and with him two hundred Males.*

Ver. 5. *Of the Sons of Shechaniah; the Son of Jabez, and with him three hundred Males.]* This was a Person of great Note, of whose Family there went up almost twice as many as did of any other Family.

Ver. 6. *Of the Sons also of Adin; Ebed the Son of Jonathan, and with him fifty Males.*

V O I. II.

Ver. 7. *And of the Sons of Elam; Jeshaiah the Son of Athaliah, and with him seventy Males.]* Concerning those, and the Families that follow to ver. 15. there is little to be noted; but that out of them many went up with Zerubbabel in the Reign of Cyrus, (which appears by the Account given in the second Chapter) as now more went up with Ezra out of the very same Families.

Ver. 8. *And of the Sons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the Son of Michael, and with him fourscore Males.*

Ver. 9. *Of the Sons of Joab; Obadiah the Son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen Males.*

Ver. 10. *And of the Sons of Shelomith; the Son of Josiphiab, and with him an hundred and threescore Males.*

Ver. 11. *And of the Sons of Bebai; Zechariah the Son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight Males.*

Ver. 12. *And of the Sons of Azgad; Johanan the Son of Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten Males.*

Ver. 13. *And of the last Sons of Adonikam, whose Names are these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Semaiah, and with them threescore Males.]* They are called the last Sons, with respect to the first of them that went up with Zerubbabel. Or, these were the last that followed Ezra: Which some look upon as a Blot on Adonikam, that his Family was the last that accompanied Ezra.

Ver. 14. *Of the Sons also of Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabbud, and with them seventy Males.*

Ver. 15. *And I gathered them together to the River that runneth to Abava;]* This seems to be the Name of a River, as well as of a Town, which stood on the Bank of Euphrates, there where this Stream emptied itself into it. Some take it for Adiabene, a City so called from Adiava, v. 31.

And there abode we in Tents three Days:] It is likely, that in the whole Journey they lodged, not in Cities and Towns, but in Tents which they carried along with them; and could pitch where and when it was most commodious for them.

And I viewed the People,] Took an Account of their Number, and of what Tribe they were.

And the Priests, and found there were none of the Sons of Levi.] That is, none who were not Priests: Of whom there were some, ver. 2.

Ver. 16. *Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Semaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief Men;]* Men of Authority among the Company; and the Heads perhaps of several Families.

Also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, Men of Understanding.] These eleven Persons he sent for to come to him, that he might employ them in a Message to a Place, where he knew there were a great many Levites; as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 17. *And I sent them with Commandment unto Iddo the Chief,]* Among the Levites, who dwelt at the Place next mentioned, and there had the free Exercise of their Religion, as this

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and many other Passages in this Book plainly enough prove. And it is very probable, they had their Synagogues (as they had afterward in their Dispersion) or other Places, where they met for religious Worship. For we find the People resorting to *Ezekiel* in their Captivity, and him preaching to them the Word of God, in many Places of his Book; particularly *ch. xxxiii. 20, 31, &c.* And *Ezra* in all likelihood was an Instructor among them, as *Joarib* and *Elnathan* also were, and *Iddo*, to whom these were sent. By which means many Profelytes were made, who left their own Country, and came with them to *Jerusalem*, when they returned, *ch. vi. 21.*

At the Place Casiphia,] Several are of Opinion, and particularly *Stephanus Morinus* lately, that this Place was in the Country of the *Caspian*, a People who gave Denomination to the *Caspian Sea*; where some of the *Israelites* were planted, who were carried captive by *Salmanasser*, and still preserved their Language and Religion. But I look upon this as unlikely, the *Caspian Sea* and the Country about it being too far off for *Ezra* to send thither these Messengers; who rather went to a Place in the Province of *Babylon*, to which they went, and did a great deal of Business, and returned in the Space of twelve Days. The Truth is (as *Dr. Alix* observes) the *Levites* were not among the *Ten Tribes*, but in *Chaldaea*. And perhaps some of them were transported into *Parthia*; where there was a City called *Caspi*, known to the old Geographers.

And I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his Brethren the Nethinims, at the Place Casiphia,] Who, it seems, were better disposed than many of the *Levites*, to whom they ministered. But *R. Solomon* and others translate the Words quite otherways; *He told them what they should say to Iddo and his Brethren*, (or, to *Achio*) *who were constituted in the Place Casiphia*. For it is plain they were not *Nethinims*, *Iddo* being called *Harosh*, a Prince, or Chief, that is, among the *Levites*: By whose Authority *Ezra* expected some *Levites*, whom he wanted to accompany him to *Jerusalem*, should be sent to him; as they were. Now this cannot be said of the *Nethinims*; for none of them were Chiefs, or Presidents of the *Levites*, but their Ministers or Servants, as appears from *ver. 20.* and other Places. Therefore the Word *Nethinim* must here signify Men appointed to live among the *Jews* of that Place; or, who had their Residence there.

That they should bring unto us Ministers for the House of our God.] That is, *Levites* to attend upon the Priests, as the *Nethinims* did upon the *Levites*.

Ver. 18. And by the good Hand of our God upon us,] God inclined their Hearts to comply with his Desire.

They brought us a Man of Understanding of the Sons of Mabli, the Son of Levi, the Son of Israel, and Sherebiab, with his Sons and his Brethren, eighteen;] They brought a Man of Understanding, viz. *Sherebiab*, (so the Words, I think, should be translated) with his Sons and Brethren, eighteen in Number.

Ver. 19. And Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiab of the Sons of Merari, his Brethren and their Sons, twenty;] These were eminent Persons also, tho' not equal to *Sherebiab*, who is noted as a Man of great Knowledge.

Ver. 20. Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the Princes had appointed for the Service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims:] Every one knows, that the *Gibeonites* were addicted by *Joshua* to be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the Service of God's House; but a great many of them being destroyed by *Saul*, there were not enow remaining to serve in those Ministries. And therefore *David* (as *Bertram* thinks, in his Book *De Repub. Jud. p. 277.*) appointed some other Persons to the same Employment; and afterwards *Solomon* appointed more; who are called therefore *Solomon's Servants*. All which, both *Gibeonites* and those who were added to them by *David* and *Solomon*, were known by the Name of *Nethinims*, as much as to say, *Dedititii*, or *Ascriptitii*, Men given, as the *Hebrew* Word denotes: For as the *Levites* were given to the Priests (*Numb. viii. 16, 19.*) so were these given to the *Levites*. And this is said to have been done by *David* and the *Princes*, because *David* advised with the Consistory about it, who are called the *Princes*, *2 Chron. xxx. 2. xxvi. 10, 11.* See *Mr. Thorndike, Rights of the Church, p. 231.* But I have observed elsewhere, that these *Nethinims* were distinct from the *Gibeonites*, and of a higher Rank in the Service of God. See *1 Chron. ix. ver. 2.*

All of them were expressed by Name.] I suppose *Iddo* sent the Names of every one of them, tho' they are not all here mentioned.

Ver. 21. Then I proclaimed a Fast there, at the River Abava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right Way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our Substance.] He being the Leader of this Colony, had Authority from the King to command whatsoever he pleased for the Good of it. And nothing was more necessary, than humbly and sorrowfully to acknowledge their Offences against God, and beg his gracious Pardon; and that he would prosper them in their Journey, and direct them in the best Way to bring themselves and all they had safe to *Jerusalem*: Which was the End of this Fast.

Ver. 22. For I was ashamed to require of the King a Band of Soldiers and Horsemen, to help us against the Enemy in the Way: Because we had spoken unto the King, saying, The Hand of our God is upon all them for good, that seek him; but his Power and his Wrath is against all them that forsake him.] He might have obtained from the King any thing that he desired; but he had so openly declared, that he depended solely upon God for safe Conduct, that he was ashamed to ask a Guard of the King to secure them in their Passage, from those Enemies that he knew would way-lay them, *ver. 31.* For the King not being much instructed in divine Matters, might imagine, that all were vain Boasts which the *Jews* had made of the Favour of God to them, and of the Prophecies concerning their Restoration: Which made *Ezra* and others so confident,

fidest, as only to desire Leave to return to their own Country; and as for a safe Passage, they took no Care, but to commit themselves to God, who would defend his own People that trusted in him. To ask therefore Protection and Defence from the King, would look as if they distrusted the Power and Favour of their God, concerning whom they had spoken so magnificently. But it was highly necessary they should beseech that of God, which they would not ask of the King; which they did by Fasting and Prayer.

Ver. 23. *So we fasted, and besought our God for this, and he was intreated of us.*] Gave them some Assurance, that their Petitions should be granted. Some think, this Fast lasted eight Days, beginning after the three Days mentioned above, ver. 15. For they began to go out of *Babylon* on the first Day of the Month, *ch. vii. 9.* and they staid at *Abava* three Days to take a View of their Company; and went from thence on the twelfth, (*ver. 31.*) And therefore they must either keep this Fast eight Days, or else they were seven Days in coming from *Babylon*, and other Places, to *Abava*; where a general Rendezvous, as we speak, was appointed. And this I take to be most probable, that they came out of *Babylon* on the first Day, and expected at *Abava* till all their Company was got together, which was about the seventh Day; and they all rested three Days to make a compleat Muster of the whole Number, and fasted one Day; and so began to take their Journey from *Abava* on the twelfth.

Ver. 24. *Then I separated twelve of the chief of the Priests, Sherebiak, Hashabiak, and ten of their Brethren with them,*] With whom he might intrust the Gifts, that had been offered for the Temple: These ten Men perhaps were principal *Levites*, who were added to the two Priests to take this Charge upon them. See *ver. 29.*

Ver. 25. *And weighed unto them the Silver, and the Gold, and the Vessels, even the Offering of the House of our God, which the King, and his Counsellors, and his Lords, and all Israel there present, had offered.*] That they might have no Excuse, if they were any way embezzelled.

Ver. 26. *I even weighed into their Hand six hundred and fifty Talents of Silver, and silver Vessels an hundred Talents, and of Gold an hundred Talents:*] Or, an hundred silver Vessels, according to their Talents; that is, every one a Talent.

Ver. 27. *Also twenty Basins of Gold, of a thousand Drums, and two Vessels of fine Copper, precious as Gold.*] They were not worth their Weight in Gold; but they were of great Value, being scarce and rare; as that Metal, called *Aurichalcum* was; which might be the Reason, why there were no more than two of them.

Ver. 28. *And I said unto them, Ye are holy unto the LORD, the Vessels are holy also,*] They being Men consecrated to God's Service, were bound above all others to be faithful in the Discharge of their Duty, especially being intrusted with holy Things; which were therefore to be carefully delivered at *Jerusalem*, just as they were committed to their Trust.

And the Silver, and the Gold are a Free-will-offering unto the LORD God of your Fathers.] Which made them still more sacred.

V O L. II.

Ver. 29. *Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the Chief of the Priests and the Levites, and Chief of the Fathers of Israel at Jerusalem, in the Chambers of the House of the LORD.*] Where they were deposited, after they had given an Account of them there, to the Persons here mentioned; who received them by the same Weight, that they were delivered unto these that brought them.

Ver. 30. *So took the Priests and the Levites, the Weight of the Silver and the Gold, and the Vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem unto the House of our God.*] This shews, that some of these twelve Men (mentioned *ver. 26.*) if not ten of them, were *Levites*, and not all Priests.

Ver. 31. *Then we departed from the River of Abava,*] Which run by that City into *Euphrates*.

On the twelfth Day of the first Month, to go unto Jerusalem;] To pursue their intended Journey. *And the Hand of our God was upon us,*] To protect and strengthen them in so dangerous and long a Journey.

And he delivered us from the Hand of the Enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the Way.] There were not only many Enemies who hated them, and were desirous to cut them off, but many Robbers who watched for a Booty, whom God either diverted some other way, or disheartned from attempting any thing against them; or, perhaps, directed them (as they prayed, *ver. 21.*) into some uncommon Ways, in which People were not wont to travel, whereby they escaped their Enemies.

Ver. 32. *And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three Days.*] Before they did any thing: For it was necessary to rest and refresh themselves a while, after so tedious a Journey, in which they spent above a Quarter of a Year. See *ch. vii. 9.* Their Friends also, it is likely, came to visit them in these three Days Time, and welcome them to *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 33. *Now on the fourth Day was the Silver and the Gold, and the Vessels weighed in the House of our God, by the Hand of Meremoth the Son of Uriah the Priest, and with him was Eleazar the Son of Phinehas, and with them was Jozabad the Son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the Son of Binnui, Levites:*] The Names of Eleazar and Phinehas continued thro' many Generations among the Priests, because they were two very eminent Persons in *Aaron's* Family. And as there were some *Levites* charged with this Treasure to bring it to *Jerusalem*, so there were some of them who saw them discharge themselves of their Trust.

Ver. 34. *By Number, and by Weight of every one: and all the Weight was written at that Time.*] There was a publick Record made of it; and the Persons forementioned, who brought the Money and the Vessels, were discharged by a publick Instrument, signed by them that received it: Or, perhaps, the Meaning may be, that there was an Inventory taken of the Goods belonging to the Temple, which the Priests were charged withal, as the Stewards of a Family are wont to be, with the Goods belonging to it.

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Ver. 35. *Also the Children of those that had been carried away which were come out of the Captivity,]* That is, this Company who came up from Babylon with Ezra.

Offered Burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel,] To express their Gratitude to God for their Restoration.

Twelve Bullocks for all Israel,] One for every Tribe.

Ninety and six Rams, seventy and seven Lambs, twelve He-goats for a Sin-offering:] For all Israel, whether still remaining in Babylon, or returned to Jerusalem.

All this was a Burnt-offering unto the LORD.] All the rest (except the He-goats) were a Burnt-offering; whereby they acknowledged the LORD for their God.

Ver 36. *And they delivered the King's Commissions unto the King's Licutenants, and to the Governors on this Side the River:]* That they might know the King's Pleasure, and what Privileges he had granted them, which are recited in the foregoing Chapter.

And they furthered the People, and the House of God.] Yielded Obedience to the King's Orders.

C H A P. IX.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when these Things were done,] When he had shewn his Commission, and it appeared that he had Power to reform all Abuses, and see the Laws of Moses observed by all the Jews, *ch. vii. 14.*

The Princes came to me, saying, The People of Israel, and the Priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the People of the Lands,] Some of the great Men came to him with a grievous Complaint, that unlawful Marriages were practised among them with those wicked Nations whom God had forbidden them to mingle withal: Which was the more to be lamented, because not only the People, but the Priests themselves and the Levites were guilty of this Sin.

Doing according to their Abominations,] This is commonly an Expression, signifying worshipping of Idols, which are called *Abominations* in Scripture; but here signifies only Imitation of the Heathen in promiscuous Marriages with any Nation whatsoever, which would soon lead them to commit Idolatry. For these Words in the Hebrew run thus, *have not separated themselves from the People of the Land, according to their Abominations,* (the Word *doing* is not there) which Mr. Mede rightly interprets, *according to the several Kinds of Idolaters in the Land round about them.*

Even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.] By this it appears, that as Marriages with the seven Nations of Canaan were expressly forbidden, *Deut. vii. 2, 3.* so Ezra thought that Law extended to all other Nations, who were not profelyted to the Jews Religion. And this is the common Opinion of the Hebrew Doctors, as Mr. Selden shews, *Lib. v. de Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap. xii.* For even before the Law of Moses, it seems to be thought unlawful, after they had

received the Covenant of Circumcision, for the Seed of Abraham to marry with other Nations that were uncircumcised, *Gen. xxxiv. 14.*

Ver. 2. *For they have taken of their Daughters for themselves, and for their Sons: So that the holy Seed have mingled themselves with the People of those Lands:]* They are called an *Holy Seed*, because of the Covenant of God with them, which made them a peculiar People, separated from all other Nations.

Yea, the Hand of the Princes and Rulers hath been chief in this Trespas.] The Case was the more dangerous, because the great Men of the Nation were the principal Offenders (*ch. x. 18, 23.*) whose Example the People followed without Fear of Punishment. It is likely, those Princes who informed Ezra of this enormous Practice, had endeavoured to reform them, but could not, because they were opposed by as great Men as themselves. But we must not cast away all Hope, tho' we cannot presently reform Mens Lives; the Time may come when it may be done.

Ver. 3. *And when I heard this Thing, I rent my Garment and my Mantle,]* Both his inner and upper Garment; which was a Token not only of very great Grief and Sorrow, but expressed his Sense of the divine Displeasure. For the Jews rent their Clothes when they apprehended God to be highly offended. See *Grotius* upon *Matth. xxvi. 65.* The *Talmudists* say, the High Priest rent his Garments otherwise than other Men, not above from the Shoulders to the Bottom, but below at his Feet, and the Skirts of his Garments, upward.

And pluck'd off the Hair of my Head, and of my Beard,] This was still a higher Sign of exceeding great Grief; for in ordinary Sorrow they only neglected their Hair, and let it hang down scattered in a careless Manner; but this was used in bitter Lamentations, even among the Heathens. So *Bockart* observes out of many Authors, particularly *Homer*, in several Places. For Example, speaking of *Ulysses* and his Companions, bewailing the Death of *Elpenor*, he saith, *Odyss. X.*

Ἐζόμηναι δὲ ἐνλαῦθα γόων, τίκλοντο τε χαίτας.

Thy sitting down there howled, and plucked off their Hairs. See *Hieroz. Lib. ii. Cap. 45.* To shave the Head or the Beard was another Thing; which the Law forbade the Jews in their mourning for the Dead, because it was a Custom of their idolatrous Neighbours, whose Manners he would not have them imitate.

And sat down astonished.] With Amazement that they should be so ungrateful to God, who had delivered them from Captivity, and with an Apprehension of their Danger, there being so open a Breach of the Divine Law, which had formerly proved their Ruin.

Ver. 4. *Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the Words of the God of Israel,]* Which it is likely he read to them, and told them the Importance of them.

Because of the Transgression of those that had been carried away:] Into Babylon, but now were returned to their own Land, little or nothing amended, either by their Banishment, or their Resto-

Restoration. He speaks not of those who were lately come back with him, but of those who came back with *Zerubbabel*, and of their Children.

And I sat astonied until the Evening Sacrifice.] When the People used to meet together to worship God.

Ver. 5. *And at the Evening Sacrifice I arose up from my Heaviness,]* Wherein he had sat ever since he heard of their foul Transgression.

And having rent my Garment and my Mantle,] He mentions that again, because he still continued, and appeared in a mournful Condition.

I fell upon my Knees, and spread out my Hands unto the LORD my God,] But put himself now into the Posture of an humbly Suppliant to the divine Majesty.

Ver. 6. *And said, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my Face to thee, my God: for our Iniquities are increased over our Head, and our Trespass is grown up unto the Heavens.]* The Sum of his Confession and Deprecation is this, which it may be useful to represent at once: That he was confounded when he thought of the Greatness of their Sins, which were ready to overwhelm them, and of the Boldness and Insolence of them beyond all Measure; and that, tho' they had seen the divine Vengeance upon their Forefathers (from whom they derived this impious Disposition) in so terrible a Manner, that they had not yet worn off the Marks of his Displeasure (ver. 6, 7.) He had begun indeed to shew Favour unto them (ver. 8.) but this so much the more aggravated their Wickedness, in that not very many Years after he had been so gracious as to deliver a small handful of them, and given them a footing again in their own Land, and in the Holy Place, and thereby had made them joyful, and given them Life, as it were, from the Dead, by restoring them to their Liberty, they returned to their old Provocations, and forgot both that they had been Bondmen, and that God had been so kind to them in that Bondage, as to make those whom they served to pity them, and give them Leave to go to their own Land, and build the House of their God, ver. 8, 9. What shall any one say for such a wretched People as this (ver. 10.) who had no Regard to their Prophets, nor to *Moses* himself, who had charged them to have nothing to do with the People of *Canaan*, whom he intended to destroy, because they had defiled that Land, but to separate themselves from them, and seek to root them out, which was the Way to plant themselves firmly there for ever, ver. 11, 12. Can we expect less than utter Destruction of this small Remnant, when after all the Punishments he hath inflicted upon us for our Sins, and his ceasing to punish us, and rescuing us in this Manner from our Captivity, we return to those Sins which are so odious to him, because so expressly against his Commandments, ver. 13, 14. If he deal so with us, we must acknowledge the Justice of his Proceedings. For when we remain a Monument of his Mercy, who are rescued (as is apparent) from our Bondage, we are notwithstanding here before him in our Offences, so guilty, that we have nothing to plead for our selves; we are not able to say

one Word to excuse our detestable Ingratitude.

There cannot be a more patheticall Supplication than this, taken all together; several Phrases of which it may be fit to explain.

For our Iniquities are increased over our Head,] A Metaphor taken from deep waters, wherein Men are drowned and ready to perish.

And our Trespass is grown up unto the Heavens.] This signifies, as I have expressed it in my Paraphrase, the high Presumption and Insolence of their Wickedness.

Ver. 7. *Since the Days of our Fathers, have we been in a great Trespass unto this Day, &c.]* And therefore were punished unto this Day, as the Verse concludes: For many of their Brethren were still in *Babylon*, or other Countries, and they who returned were in danger to be undone for their continued Sins.

Vir. 8. *And to give us a Nail in his holy Place.]* By Nails or Pins Tents were fastened to the Ground; therefore this signifies (as it is explained in the Margin) a settled Abode, after long Banishment.

Ver. 9. *To give us a reviving,]* For *Ezekiel* compares them when they were in *Babylon*, to the dry Bones of dead Men lying in their Graves, ch. xxxvii. 1, &c.

And to give us a Wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.] From hence some infer, that the Wall of *Jerusalem*, before *Nehemiah* came, was built as well as the Temple. But the Hebrew Word *Gedar* should be otherwise translated; for it doth not properly signify a Wall, but an Hedge or Fence, such as were made for the Folds of Sheep. Whereby *Ezra* expresses (as *Huetius* well notes) the singular Care of God of them; who being the Shepherd of *Israel*, had gathered together his scattered Sheep, and brought them back into their ancient Folds, wherein he preserved them safe, even when they had no Wall to defend them, under the powerful Protection of the King of *Persia*.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. These Verses need no Explication more than I have given in the Paraphrase upon them.

Ver. 13. *Our God hath punished us less than our Iniquities deserve.]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *hast with-held beneath our Iniquities*: That is, forbore to punish. For, as when God will no longer forbear, he is said to arise, and take Vengeance: So here (as *Lud. de Dieu* observes) on the contrary, he is said to withhold himself below; that is, not to arise, but wait patiently for their Amendment.

Ver. 14. *So that there should be no remnant nor escaping?]* Not one of such a wicked Nation left remaining, but all utterly extirpated.

Ver. 15. *O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous, &c.]* Either the Word *righteous* here signifies very merciful, which was the Reason they were not destroyed as they deserved: Or, the next Words must be translated, not, *for we remain*, but *though we remain escaped*: That is, God's Justice will not let us escape, tho' for the present he forbear to punish us.

Behold, we are before thee in our Trespases: for we cannot stand before thee, because of this.] As this cannot be denied, so it cannot be defended or excused: But we must yield up ourselves

selves to bear the Punishment, unto which thou wilt condemn us.

Thus he concludes this admirable Representation of their Condition; which is as much as if he had said, Unless we reform, I know not how to beg for Mercy, but we must be undone, and that most justly. For he gives them no Hope, intending to put them into a great Terror and Affrightment, and see how that would work upon their Hearts. And we find in the next Chapter (*ver. 2.*) it had this Effect; that one stood up and spake in the Name of all the rest, that they would renew their Covenant with God, and put away these Abominations (which was effectual Repentance) and then they hope God would be merciful unto them.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the House of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel, a very great Congregation of Men, and Women, and Children: for the People wept very sore.] This Prayer being made at the Time of the Evening Sacrifice, (as we read before, *ch. ix. 5.*) when many assembled to worship God; and being uttered with great Passion, and the highest Expressions of Grief and Sorrow, it moved those very much, who were present; especially to see such a Person as Ezra, a Priest of God, and a great Ruler under the King of Persia, so dejected, full of Fear, Confusion, and Astonishment: The Report of which was presently carried thro' all Jerusalem, and perhaps to neighbouring Places; which brought together a great Number of People of all Sorts, Men, Women, and Children; who all made great Lamentation, looking upon themselves as under the high Displeasure of the Almighty.

Ver. 2. And Shechaniah the Son of Jehiel, one of the Sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra,] He seems to have been a good Man, not being numbered among those that had trespassed, tho' several of his Family were; even his own Father, Jehiel, and several of his Uncles, the Sons of his Grand-father Elam, *ch. v. 26.*

We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange Wives of the People of the Land: yet now there is Hope in Israel concerning this Thing.] Ezra seemed to have given up all for gone, the more to awaken and affright them out of their Sins; and therefore this Person stands up to keep them from Despair, and to propound a Remedy, which he hoped would prove effectual: This he spake in the Name of the rest; with the principal of which, perhaps, he had consulted.

Ver. 3. Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God, to put away all the Wives, and such as are born of them, according to the Counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the Commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the Law.] That which was done contrary to the Law of God, was looked upon as null, and therefore these were accounted no Marriages, and their Children were no better than those we call Bastards, and were not to be a Part of the Family, but to be put away with their Mothers. St. Paul

indeed allows the *Corinthians* to keep their Pagan Wives or Husbands, because they had them before they were Christians; and there was no Law of God or Man against their Marriages, as there was here a very strict Law of God forbidding them. It may seem hard indeed that the Children should be put away as well as their Mothers; but they were unlawfully born, and must follow the Condition of their Mothers, and being educated in Superstition, might corrupt other Children: And therefore it was unlawful hereafter to marry with the Children of these Women, for they were reputed unclean, though their Fathers were *Israelites*. Thus *Maimonides* reports the Sense of the Law to be, *A Son begot of a Gentile by an Israelite, is not to be accounted a Son.* If a Son indeed were begot by a Gentile of an *Israelitish* Woman, the Child was accounted an *Israelite*, for *Partus sequitur Ventrem*. But a Child was of the same Condition with his Mother, and no Regard was had to the Father at all. So that if a Child was begot by an *Israelite*, of a Woman that was a Slave, the Child was a Slave; but if on the contrary, a Woman of *Israel* had a Child by one that was a Slave, the Child was as free as any other *Israelite*. See *Selden* in the Place above-mentioned, *pag. 616.*

But it is likely, when they put away these Wives and Children, they made some Provision for them; for all was to be done according to the Counsel of Ezra, and other good Men, who feared God, and trembled to think his Commandment was broke, and therefore judged they should be put away; but they prescribed the Manner of it, how it should be done; which, it is probable, was not without some Consideration of them.

Ver. 4. Arise:] For he lay prostrate upon the Ground, *ver. 1.*

For this Matter belongeth unto thee;] Who had the greatest Skill in the Law, and a full Power from the King of Persia, to see every thing done according unto it, *ch. vii. 14.* Now the Renewing of the Covenant, for the Observation of the Law, was to be done by the Authority of the Sovereign, as we see by the Examples of Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah; and therefore it is a great Mistake (as Mr. Thorndike observes) to imagine the People could renew it, or any Part of it, without the Consent of the Sovereign. From whence we may conclude, that Ezra having such a Commission, as is mentioned *ch. vii.* was established by the Sovereign Power, with an Authority to execute the Law against all Transgressors.

We also will be with thee: be of good Courage and do it.] He promises his Assistance, and the Assistance of the principal Persons; which might give him Confidence of Success.

Ver. 5. Then arose Ezra, and made the Chief Priests, the Levites, and all Israel] All that were then present.

To swear that they should do according to this Word: and they swore.] He admonished them of their Duty in the Name of God, and then persuaded them to take a solemn Oath (as they did) to put away their strange Wives and Children. For the Commission given to Ezra supposing a full Leave to the People to live according

according to the Law, enabled him to govern them by it, yea, to swear them to observe it; for he might do whatsoever he found necessary to keep them in Obedience.

Ver. 6. *Then Ezra rose up from before the House of God,]* This seems to signify, that he made them swear before he would rise up; that they seeing his great Humiliation before God, in the most doleful Condition, might be moved to a more forward Compliance.

And went into the Chamber of Johanan the Son of Eliashib:] That he might there consult with the Princes and Elders, (ver. 8.) how to put this Counsel in Execution. This *Eliashib* was the High-Priest who succeeded *Joiakim*, who succeeded *Jeshua*; who living a long time, his Son *Joiakim* enjoyed the Priesthood but a few Years: And *Eliashib* lasted not long; but seems to have been dead (as Dr. *Alix* thinks) a little after the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*. See *Nehem. xii. 10.*

And when he came thither, he did eat no Bread, nor drink Water:] The Word *when* is not in the Hebrew; therefore it had better be translated, *till* he came thither he had eaten nothing.

For he mourned because of the Transgression of them that had been carried away.] And in Time of Mourning and Sorrow they were wont to fast.

Ver. 7. *And they made Proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem, unto all the Children of the Captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem;]* This Proclamation was issued forth by the Counsel of the Princes and Elders mentioned in the next Verse.

Ver. 8. *And that whosoever would not come within three Days,]* This was a short Time; but they were resolv'd to be speedy in the Business, lest they that propounded it, should cool, or any Thing occur to hinder it.

According to the Counsel of the Princes and the Elders,] It was a great Power which the King of *Persia* intrusted *Ezra* withal; which he managed very discreetly; for he would not make the following Decree by his own sole Authority, without the Advice of the *Sanhedrim*; which is generally thought to be meant by the *Princes and Elders*, viz. the High-Court of *Jerusalem*; for they that are here called *Princes*, are, ver. 14. called *Judges*.

All his Substance should be forfeited,] In the Hebrew, *devoted*: Which signifies, that his Goods were to be so forfeited, as to become sacred to God; and so incapable to be restored to the former Owner, being put into the Treasury of God's House.

And himself separated from the Congregation of those that had been carried away.] Excluded from their Society, and all the Benefits of their Religion. See chap. vii. 26. This was a Punishment inflicted by all Nations on those who would not conform themselves to the Laws; as *Grotius* observes, *de Imperio Sum. Potest. circa sacra*, Cap. ix. p. 242. Edit. *Hagæ*; and *Selden*, *de Synedr.* Lib. i. Cap. vii. p. 146, 147, 150.

Ver. 9. *Then all the Men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem, within three Days:]* And all they of other Tribes complied also with this Proclamation, as appears from ver. 25. but these are alone men-

tioned; because they were the chief, and the others were mixed with them.

It was the ninth Month, and the twentieth Day of the Month,] About a Quarter of a Year after *Ezra* and his Company came to *Jerusalem*.

And all the People sat in the Street of the House of God] Some take this to be the Street which led to the Temple; but it was rather the Court of the People, where they worshipped; which lying open, and not being yet girt about with a Wall, (as we may guess from *Nehem. ii. 8.*) is called a *Street*.

Trembling, because of this Matter,] The Offence they had committed against God; and the Consequence thereof.

And for the great Rain.] Which they took as a Token of God's Anger against them, because of their Sin.

Ver. 10. *And Ezra the Priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange Wives to increase the Trespass of Israel.]* When they should have been bewailing their former Sins, which cast them out of their Land, they added new Transgressions, when they were restored to it.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore make Confession unto the LORD God of your Fathers, and do his Pleasure:]* Confession of Sin alone, without Obedience to God's Will and entire Submission to him, is insufficient to Reconciliation with him.

And separate yourselves from the People of the Land, and from the strange Wives.] There being no Mention here made of their Children, but only of their Wives, it hath made some think, that they kept their Children, and by Circumcision dedicated them to God, teaching them to renounce the Infidelity of their Mothers: For tho' *Shecaniah* propounded the putting away the Children also, (ver. 3.) yet it may be thought, that *Ezra*, to whom the Matter was referred, mitigated the Severity of it; because we do not read any thing of them, but only of the Wives, when he came to order what should be done.

Ver. 12. *Then all the Congregation answered, and said with a loud Voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.]* They saw no other Remedy, and therefore submitted to what he required, as the Pleasure of God.

Ver. 13. *But the People are many, and it is a Time of much Rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither is this a Work of one Day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this Thing.]* They give very good Reasons why for the present they should be dismissed, and more Time taken to make Inquisition after all the Offenders, and examine them. And to shew they really desired the Thing should be done, they propound a Method in the next Verse, for the Management of it.

Ver. 14. *Let now our Rulers of all the Congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange Wives in our Cities, come at appointed Times, and with them the Elders of every City, and the Judges thereof, until the fierce Wrath of our God for this Matter be turned from us.]* They would have the great Council at *Jerusalem* settled, (for that's meant by *let the Rulers of all the Congregation stand*) and be ready to take Cogni-

Cognizance of this Matter; set Days being appointed for the Offenders in every City to be brought before them, by the Elders and Judges of those Cities (that is, some Delegates from the Senate of that Place) who should testify that they had seen the Divorces made from their strange Wives; for they were best able to know the Circumstances of every Person, and all their Actions. And this they would have to continue, as long as there remained any thing to be done in this Business; that the Anger of God might be turned away from them. So *de Dieu* truly renders, I think, the last Words of this Verse.

How *Elders* and *Judges* differ, is a Dispute among learned Men. Sometimes they signify the same; but when they are mentioned together, it is reasonable to think their Powers were distinct. And *Campegius Vitringa* seems to me to have given a good Account of them; that by *Elders* are meant the supreme Senate in every City, who judged in all Civil Causes; and by *Judges* (as distinct from the other) are meant Judges of an inferior Bench, by whom all Money Matters were tried. For though the Senate might judge in all Causes, yet it is reasonable to think they referred small Matters to a lower Court. This he gathers out of the Scriptures, and shews it is conformable to the Traditions of the *Talmudists*. *De Synagoga Vetere*, Lib. ii. Cap. ix. p. 58. And see *L'Empereur* upon *Bertram De Repub. Jud.* p. 395.

Ver. 15. Only *Jonathan the Son of Asabel*, and *Jahaziah the Son of Tilvab*, were employed about this Matter:] These were two Priests, who were chosen to see all Things done according to the foregoing Resolution: That is, to appoint the Time when the Men of each City should come to bring in their Names, and to acquaint the great Council that these were Elders and Judges of the Cities, who had seen their Orders executed.

And *Mesbullam*, and *Shabbethai the Levite* helped them.] They were both of them *Levites*, as I take it, who were to assist the fore-named Priests in so great a Work.

Ver. 16. And the Children of the Captivity did so:] They who came up out of *Babylon* to their own Country, are constantly called the Children of the Captivity; to put them in mind of their Servitude, and of their Freedom from it.

And *Ezra the Priest*, with certain Chief of the Fathers, after the House of their Fathers, and all of them by their Names, were separated,] Sequestered themselves from all other Business, to attend wholly to the Issue of this.

And sat down on the first Day of the tenth Month to examine the Matter.] I cannot imagine what it was that they were set a-part to examine, unless it was, whether the Persons before-named, did their Duty: For it is likely they brought the Names of those who were found guilty, (which here follow) unto *Ezra* and these Assessors; who examined whether they found more than these, and of what Quality and Condition they were.

Ver. 17. And they made an End with all the Men that had taken strange Wives, by the first Day of the first Month.] Three Months therefore

were spent in this Disquisition; which shews it was very exact.

Ver. 18. And among the Sons of the Priests, there were found that had taken strange Wives: namely, of the Sons of *Jeshua*, the Son of *Jozadak*, and his Brethren; *Maaseiah*, and *Eliezer*, and *Jarib*, and *Gedaliah*.] No wonder, the People broke the Law, when so many of those who were supposed to understand it best (*viz.* the Priests) gave them such a foul Example of Lust and Levity (as *Pellicanus* speaks) yea, some of the Sons of the High-Priest; which made the Example more pernicious. Which may be the Reason, as he conjectures, why *Jeshua*, the High-Priest, was represented in a Vision to *Zechariah* the Prophet in filthy Garments; because his Family (Sons and Brethren) were defiled with this Impurity. For, as *Cicero* saith, out of *Plato*, in a Letter to *Lentulus*, *Tales plerumque cives reliqui esse solent, quales principes in civitate fuerint viri*: Such the rest of the Citizens are wont to be, as the great Men in the City are.

Ver. 19. And they gave their Hands, that they would put away their Wives;] Solemnly engaged, by making a Covenant, or by an Oath, that they would do what was enjoined. See *Ezek.* xvii. 18. But it may be expounded simply, they put their Hand to the Business; that is, did it effectually, and actually put away their strange Wives.

And being guilty, they offered a Ram of the Flock for their Trespas.] More than that, they openly confessed their Guilt, and made an Offering for their Offence; and hereby perhaps endeavoured to make some amends for their Sin, by being the first that condemned themselves and reformed, and offered a Trespas-offering; which, some think, all the rest made, after their Example.

Ver. 20. And of the Sons of *Immer*; *Hanani*, and *Zebadiah*.

Ver. 21. And of the Sons of *Harim*; *Maaseiah*, and *Elijah*, and *Shemaiah*, and *Jehiel*, and *Uzziab*.

Ver. 22. And of the Sons of *Pashur*; *Elioenai*, *Maaseiah*, *Ishmael*, *Nethaneel*, *Jozabad*, and *Elaiah*.] All these were Priests, who were very deep in this Guilt, and being publick Persons, led others fearlessly into it.

Ver. 23. Also of the Levites; *Jozabad*, and *Shimei*, and *Kelaiah* (the same is *Kelita*) *Pethabiah*, *Judah*, and *Eliezer*.] There were not so many *Levites*, as there were Priests, in the Transgression.

Ver. 24. Of the Singers also, *Eliashib*; and of the Porters, *Shullum*, and *Talcum*, and *Uri*.] These seem to have been more modest; there being but one Offender found among the Singers; and but three among the Porters.

Ver. 25. Moreover, of *Israel*, of the Sons of *Parosh*; *Ramiah*, and *Jeziab*, and *Malchiah*, and *Miamin*, and *Eleczar*, and *Malchijah*, and *Benaiah*.] The *Hebrews* call all those *Israel*, who were not *Levites*, or dedicated to the Service of the Temple. Whence the Court of *Israel* was that Place wherein the Men of *Israel* worshipped, as they were distinguished from the Priests and *Levites*,

Ver.

Ver. 26. *And of the Sons of Elam; Mattaniab, Zechariah, and Jebiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliab.*] This Jebiel was Shechaniab's Father, ver. 2. And yet notwithstanding, tho' his Father and Kindred were guilty of this Crime, which Ezra bewailed, he did not stick to speak his Mind, how it should be punished. An admirable Example of zealous Integrity!

Ver. 27. *And of the Sons of Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniab, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.*] The two former, Parosh and Elam, with this Zattu, and all that follow to ver. 32. were of the Tribe of Judah.

Ver. 28. *Of the Sons also of Bebai. Jehohanan, Hananiab, Zabbai, and Athlai.*

Ver. 29. *And of the Sons of Bani; Mesbullam, Malluch, and Adaiab, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.*

Ver. 30. *And of the Sons of Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah; Mattaniab, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh.*

Ver. 31. *Of the Sons of Harim; Eliezer, Ishijab, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,*

Ver. 32. *Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.*] Now follows an Account of those of the other Tribe.

Ver. 33. *Of the Sons of Hasbun; Mattenai, Mattathab, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.*

Ver. 34. *Of the Sons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,*

Ver. 35. *Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chellub,*

Ver. 36. *Vaniab, Meremoth, Eliashib,*

Ver. 37. *Mattaniab, Mattenai, and Jaasau,*

Ver. 38. *And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,*

Ver. 39. *And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiab,*

Ver. 40. *Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,*

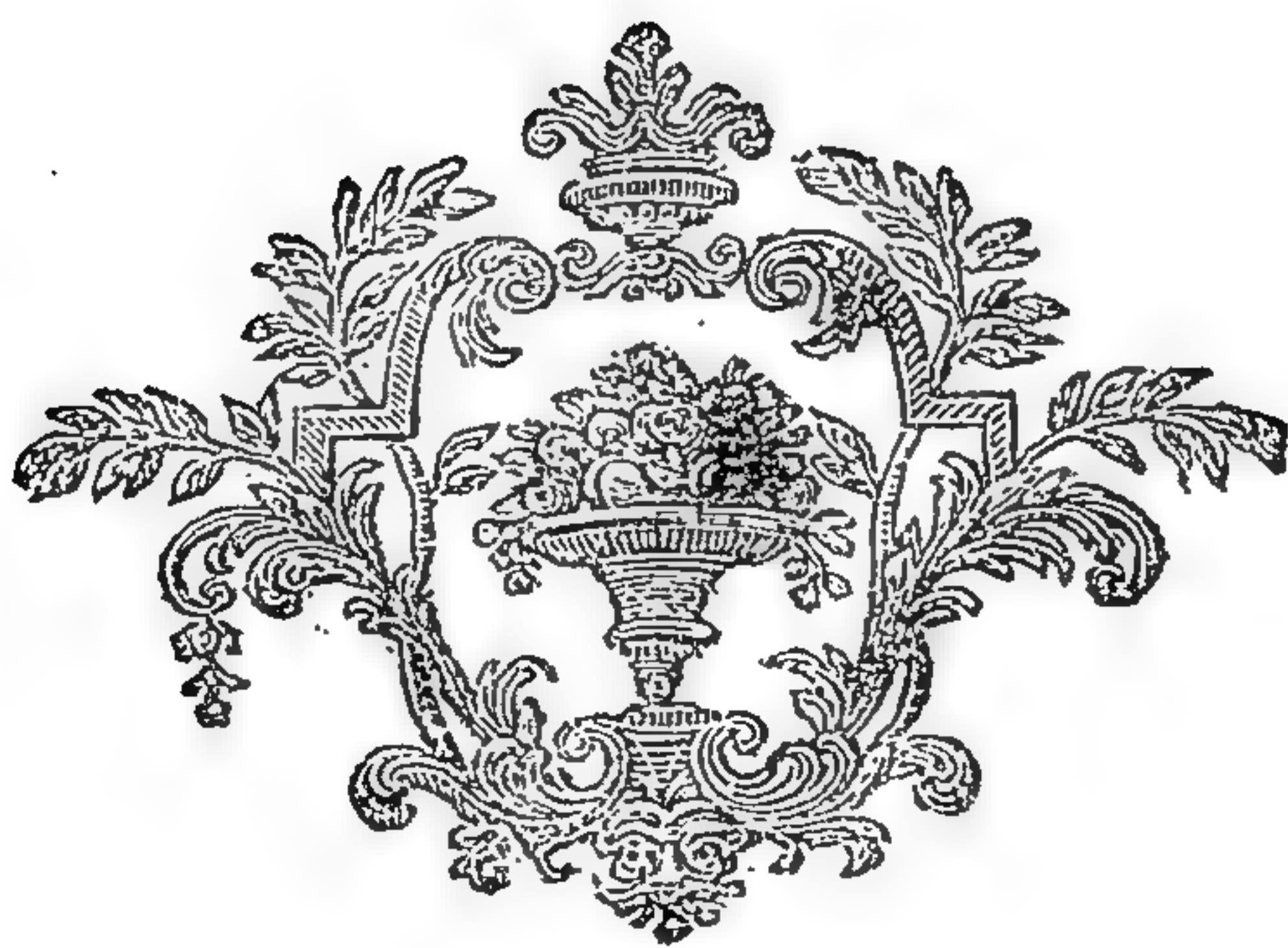
Ver. 41. *Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,*

Ver. 42. *Shallum, Ameriah, and Joseph.*

Ver. 43. *Of the Sons of Nebo; Jeiel, Mattathiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.*] Some take Nebo for a Place, of which the following Families were Citizens. But nothing of this is worth enquiring into.

Ver. 44. *All these had taken strange Wives:]* There is no great Number of them, in Comparison with all that returned from Captivity: But they seem to have been eminent Persons, who would have spread the Contagion, if a Stop had not been put to it.

And some of them had Wives, by whom they had Children.] There were some of them Women, that had brought them Children, as the Vulgar translate it; which *de Dieu* shews, is the plainest Translation of these Words. Here was a fair Occasion to have spoken of the putting away their Children as well as their Wives, if that Motion had been prosecuted. But nothing being here said of it, it makes me think, the Observation is true which I made Verse 11. See there.





A
 COMMENTARY
 UPON THE
 BOOK
 OF
 NEHEMIAH.

THAT *Nehemiah* himself was the Author of this Book there can be no reasonable Doubt; for he saith as much in the beginning of it, and all along relates what he did in his own Person, for the rebuilding the Wall of *Jerusalem*, and other Things. He lived in the Reign of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, and came into *Judæa* thirteen Years after *Ezra*; unto whom the King of *Persia* gave great Authority, as he had done to *Ezra*; God disposing his Heart to have some *Jews* still about him in his Court, for whom he had a Kindness. After him, we do not find that the Kings of *Persia* made any Governor, but left Things, it is probable, to the Management of *Jaddua* the High-Priest, as *Corn. Bertram* thinks. See *De Republ. Judaica*, p. 168, 173, 175.

C H A P. I.

Ver. 1. **T**HE Words of *Nehemiah*] Or, as *Pellicanus* translates it, *Gesta* (for so

the *Hebrew* Word often signifies) the Things which *Nehemiah* did.

The Son of Hachaliah.] We are no where told who this was, nor of what Tribe: *Eusebius* and others say of the Tribe of *Judah*.

And it came to pass in the Month Chisleu,] Which answers to our *November*, and Part of *December*.

In the twentieth Year,] Not of *Artaxerxes*, but of *Nehemiah* his Life. See *Chap. ii. 1.*

As I was in Shushan the Palace,] In the Region of *Elymais*, where the *Persian* Kings kept their Court in Winter, and from its pleasant and beautiful Situation, was called by Heathen Writers *Susa*, which signifies a *Lily*; or (as *Athenæus* saith, *Lib. xii.*) a *Rose*. *Stephanus Byzantinus* gives this Account of it, it was called Σῶσα, ἀπὸ τῶν κρίνων ἃ πολλὰ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ πεφύκει ἐκείνῃ, from the Lilies that grew in Abundance in that Country. Our *Dr. Hyde* hath a peculiar Fancy, that the *Persians* called it *Sus*, which signifies *Liquorice*; but the *Jews*, to compliment *Abasuerus*, called it in these Books by this Name

Name of a better Sound, which signifies a Lily, *Hist. Relig. vet. Pers. Cap. 35. p. 414.*

Ver. 2. *That Hanani, one of my Brethren,* And, I suppose, one of his Family.

Came, he and certain Men of Judah, Came from Jerusalem to Shushan, either about Business, or finding Things very hard with them in Judea.

And I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the Captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. He enquired of the Condition wherein they were who returned out of Babylon into Judea, and whether Jerusalem were again become a flourishing City; as it was natural for him to do, especially being a Man that loved his Nation exceedingly.

Ver. 3. *And they said unto me, The Remnant that are left of the Captivity there in the Province,* So Judea is called, *Ezra v. 8.* See there.

Are in great Affliction and Reproach: the Wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the Gates thereof are burnt with Fire. They answer to both Parts of this Inquiry, that the People were in great Distress and Contempt by their insolent Neighbours, wherewith they were surrounded, and Jerusalem lay without any Walls or Gates to defend it from their Injuries. He knew very well that it was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Walls beaten down; therefore their Meaning is, that the Walls and Gates lay as the Chaldeans left them after that Devastation, and were not repaired, tho' the Temple was built again.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass when I heard these Words, that I sat down* Upon the Ground, as the Manner was, in great Sorrow, and perhaps in Ashes.

And wept, and mourned certain Days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of Heaven, With his Face toward Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of Heaven,* In this Style they all spake of God (as I observed, *Ezra i.*) after the Captivity; signifying, as Conradus Pellicanus observes, his sovereign Dominion over all Things that are contained within the Compass of the Heavens; the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Angels and Men, and all Creatures.

The great and terrible God, He is called Great, not with Respect to those petty Gods that the Heathen worshipped, who had no Power at all, but with respect to all Potentates either in Heaven or in Earth; and he is call'd terrible, because he is most humbly to be worshipped and revered by them all.

That keepeth Covenant and Mercy for them that love him, and observe his Commandments: Next, he celebrates his Faithfulness and Truth in performing his Promises, to those that plainly declare they sincerely love him, by keeping his Commandments. These he never fails to bless, because they are faithful to him.

Ver. 6. *Let thine Ear now be attentive, and thine Eyes open, that thou mayest hear the Prayer of thy Servant, which I pray before thee now, Day and Night, for the Children of Israel thy Servants, and confess the Sins of the Children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I, and my Fathers House have sinned.* A deep

V. O. L. II.

Sense of our own Unworthiness, is a good Qualification for the Mercy we beg of God: This *Nehemiah* expresses very sensibly, both here and in the next Verse.

Ver. 7. *We have dealt very corruptly against thee,* Some of the Jews expound it, We have despised and contemned thee.

And have not kept the Commandments, nor the Statutes, nor the Judgments, which thou commandedst thy Servant Moses. But violated every one of them, to the high Offence both of God and Man.

Ver. 8. *Remember, I beseech thee, the Word that thou commandedst thy Servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the Nations:* Which they had seen fulfilled by the Assyrians and Chaldeans.

Ver. 9. *But if ye turn unto me, and keep my Commandments, and do them;* As he hoped some of them now did.

Tho' there were of you cast out unto the uttermost Part of the Heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the Place that I have chosen to set my Name there. This Promise made by Moses he hoped God would fulfil, as he had done the Threatning. It is a very pious Observation of Dr. Jackson (Book iii. Chap. 17.) that *Nehemiah* framed this Prayer to God, and directed his Enterprize for the Restoration of Jerusalem, by the Rule of Moses, mentioned in *Deut. xxx. 1, 2, 3, 4.* and he plainly found the Truth of that Prediction in the Readiness of the King of Persia to grant his Petition; which confirm'd his Belief of what Moses there saith, altho' a Prophet by Profession dissuaded his Enterprize, as likely to prove dangerous to his Person, *ch. vi. 10, 11.*

Ver. 10. *Now these are thy Servants, and thy People, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great Power, and by thy strong Hand.* For nothing but the over-ruling Power of God could have moved Cyrus to dismiss this whole Nation out of Captivity, and let them return to their own Land. Or, as some think, he beseeches his Compassion to them, because they were his peculiar People, redeemed out of the Egyptian Bondage by many Miracles.

Ver. 11. *O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine Ear be attentive to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to the Prayer of thy Servants, who desire to fear thy Name:* He was not alone in this Petition for Mercy, but there were many others, who would worship him sincerely. So the Words are in the Hebrew, *who will fear, or delight to fear thy Name.*

And prosper, I pray thee, thy Servant this Day, He prayed Night and Day, as he saith, *ver. 6.* But this was the Prayer he made on that Day when he went to wait upon the King.

And grant him Mercy in the Sight of this Man. He means the King, unto whom he pointed as it were with his Finger, when he was going to attend upon him.

For I was the Kings Cup-bearer. And perhaps, as he came into his Presence, he secretly made this Prayer to God in his own Breast. Many of the Jews, by the singular Favour of God, obtained considerable Dignities in their Captivity, as Daniel and his Companions, Zerubbabel and others: Among whom was this

X x x x 2

good

good Man, who was advanced to this Place of Cup-bearer, when he was but a Youth, as our *Rainoldus* hath shewn, in his *Censura Lib. Apocryph.* p. 1496.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **A**ND it came to pass in the Month Nisan, in the twentieth Year of Artaxerxes the King,] Which was almost four Months after he heard of the desolate Condition wherein Jerusalem lay: In all which Time, I suppose, his Turn of Waiting did not come; so that he wanted Opportunity to speak unto the King. Or, as others will have it, he and his Friends retired all this Time, and spent it in Fasting and Prayer.

That Wine was before him:] He was at Dinner or Supper, and he called for Wine; which was ready for him.

And I took up the Wine, and gave it unto the King:] After the Manner that the Cup-bearer was wont to do.

Now I had not been beforetime sad in his Presence.] But always appeared chearful and well pleased, as young Men so advanced use to be; and perhaps entertained the King at Table with pleasant Discourse.

Ver. 2. Wherefore the King said unto me, Why is thy Countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?] There did not appear in his Countenance any Sign of Indisposition of Body.

This is nothing else but Sorrow of Heart.] Some inward Trouble which grieved his Spirit.

Then I was very sore afraid,] Lest the King should have a Suspicion, that he had any treasonable Design in his Thoughts, and intended to poison him, as it was easy for the Cup-bearer to do: Or rather, he was afraid he should not prevail in his Suit; the Court, it's likely, being full of such as would oppose it.

Ver. 3. And said unto the King, Let the King live for ever:] They that think he was afraid the King should be jealous of him, take the Meaning to be, Let not the King fear I mean him any Harm, but pray for his long Life. But this was a common Form, of wishing the King long Happiness, as appears from several Places in *Daniel*, and hath no Respect to that now mentioned.

Why should not my Countenance be sad, when the City, the Place of my Fathers Sepulchres, lieth waste, and the Gates thereof are consumed with Fire?] Men naturally have a great Love to the Monuments of their Ancestors, and are troubled to see the Place where they are laid desolate. He did not speak a Word of Religion, or the Divine Worship, (as *Grotius* observes:) For tho' Artaxerxes had a great Affection for the Jews, and had their God in Veneration, (as appears by the Edict he sent to *Ezra* thirteen Years before) yet the Company about him might not be so well dispos'd; but had the same Affection and Concern for their Country and Relations that he had, tho' they did not worship the same God.

Ver. 4. Then the King said unto me, For what dost thou make Request?] This argues, the King had a great Kindness for him, that he so rea-

dily ask'd what he would have him do for him, to ease him of his Trouble.

So I prayed to the God of Heaven.] In his Mind he silently beseeched God to guide his Tongue, and to bow the King's Heart to grant his Request.

Ver. 5. And I said unto the King, If it please the King, and if thy Servant have found Favour in thy Sight,] It was a bold Request he was going to make, and therefore before he mentions it, he submits it to the King's Will and Pleasure; and acknowledges he had no Merit, but depended wholly upon the King's Kindness; unto whom perhaps he might have performed some acceptable Service.

That thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto the City of my Fathers Sepulchres,] This might lead *Eusebius* and others to think *Nehemiah* was of the Tribe of Judah, because his Ancestors dwelt in Jerusalem, and were there buried.

That I may build it.] Build the Walls of it, and make it a City again; whereas now it was but an open Town.

Ver. 6. And the King said unto me (the Queen also sitting by him)] Which was not usual, as Historians say, but is noted here as a Thing extraordinary; because it is likely she favoured him, and promoted the Grant of his Request.

For how long shall thy Journey be? and when wilt thou return?] This is another Argument of the Kindness he had for him; that he would not lose his Service, nor be long without it.

So it pleased the King to send me, and I set him a Time.] He having told the King how long he desired to be absent from his Duty, the King permitted him to go. How long that was, is not certain. But it is not likely it was for twelve Years, (mentioned *c. v. 14. xiii. 6.*) but rather he asked Leave for a Year, or perhaps for half so much; which made him so quick in dispatching the building of the Wall, which he finished in two and fifty Days, *ch. vi. 15.* After which, it is likely, he returned to *Shushan*, according to his Appointment: And the King sent him back as his Governor for twelve Years; his Presence being very serviceable, or perhaps necessary there, for the better ordering of that Province, to the King's Content.

Ver. 7. Moreover, I said unto the King, If it please the King, let Letters be given me to the Governors beyond the River, that they may convey me over, till I come into Judah:] Give him a safe Conduct, and furnish him with Necessaries in his Journey, thro' their several Provinces, where they had Authority.

Ver. 8. And a Letter unto Asaph the Keeper of the Kings Forest,] I suppose, he means the Forest of Lebanon; from whence he might be furnish'd with Materials for his Building. Here the Word *Pardes* signifies differently from what it doth in other Places where it is used; which are but two, besides this, *Eccles. ii. 5. Canticles iv. 13.* where it signifies a most pleasant Garden, planted with all Sorts of Trees: And this Forest, it seems, was so sweet and pleasant a Place, that it deserved to be called by the same Name.

That he may give me Timber to make Beams for the Gates of the Palace, which appertained to the

the House,] The vulgar *Latin*, by the Palace understands the *Tower of the House*; and so *Pellicanus*, *Portas Templi*, the Gates of the Temple. For tho' the Temple itself was built, yet the several Courts seem not to have been walled about, nor the Gates to the Temple made; for that it should be meant of the Gates of the King's Palace, which was near the Temple, is altogether unlikely, there being no Occasion to build a Palace for the King of *Persia*; and no other King could be intended.

And for the Wall of the City, and for the House that I shall enter into:] He desired Leave to build a convenient House for himself, and for those that should be future Governors.

And the King granted me according to the good Hand of my God upon me.] The Hand is sometimes taken (as *Drusus* observes) in an ill Sense, for inflicting Punishments, *Ruth* i. 13. *Jerem.* xv. 17. for we strike others with the Hand: And sometimes in a good Sense, for helping and assisting others, for we extend Favours to Men with our Hand. Thus he explains *Psalms* lxxxviii. 6. *cut off from thy Hand*, that is, fallen from thy Grace and Favour. *Pindar*, he observes, thus uses the *Hand of God*, for his Help and Aid, *Olymp.* X. Θεῷ σὺν παλάμᾳ, *by the Hand of God*; which the *Scholiast* interprets, Τῇ τῷ Θεῷ δυνάμει καὶ βοηθείᾳ, *by the Power and Help of God*, *Miscellanea*, Cent. i. Cap. lxxxv. Thus *Nehemiah* is to be here understood; by the Divine Favour, which inclined the King to do what he desired; which he calls God's good Hand.

Ver. 9. *Then I came to the Governors beyond the River, and gave them the Kings Letters. (Now the King had sent Captains of the Army, and Horsemen with me.)]* This the King did over and above what he desired, which procured him the greater Respect from the Governors, when they saw the Care the King took for the Safety of his Person.

Ver. 10. *When Sanballat the Horonite,]* He seems to have been a petty Prince of *Moab*, or some great Man of that Country; for *Horonaim* was an eminent City there, *Isaiah* xv. 5. xlviii. 3, 5, 34.

And Tobiah the Servant, the Ammonite,] He had been a Slave of that Country, but now advanced to some Authority (perhaps, to be a Governor of a Province) in these Parts. The Mention of these two great Men, shews, that the Nations of *Moab* and *Ammon* were restored as well as the *Jews*, according to the Divine Oracles; and were well known, that their Destruction by the People of God might be the more observable; which was in the Time of the *Maccabees*, who subdued those Nations according to the Predictions of several Prophets.

Heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a Man to seek the Welfare of the Children of Israel.] With such Authority from the King, and in such Favour with him; as appeared by the Letters he brought with him, and the Guard that attended him, and the Diligence of the several Governors, thro' whose Provinces he passed, to serve him.

Ver. 11. *So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three Days.]* In which he rested himself,

and received the Visits of his Friends; as *Ezra* had done, *chap.* viii. 32.

Ver. 12. *And I arose in the Night,]* At the End of those Days, it is likely, for he was resolved to make no Delay.

I and some few Men with me,] In whom he most confided.

Neither told I any Man what my God had put in my Heart to do at Jerusalem:] He being a Courtier, had learned to hold his Peace, and observe when it was a fit Time to speak, and to whom; for he would not trust to every Body, knowing there was much Falseness in Mens Hearts; and Secrecy was necessary to keep his Designs from being betrayed.

Neither was there any Beast with me, save the Beast that I rode upon.] They all went on Foot besides himself, that there might be the less Noise, and no Notice taken of what he did. What Beast it was, on which he rode, whether Horse or Mule, is not worth the Inquiry; it is likely a Mule, on which great Men were wont to ride in those Countries.

Ver. 13. *And I went out by Night, by the Gate of the Valley,]* This Valley is mentioned again, *ch.* iii. 13. but whereabouts it was, is not remembred, but only that it lay before the Well called the *Dragon-Well*.

Even before the Dragon-Well,] So called, either from the silent sliding of the Water (as a Serpent creeps) from the Fountain *Siloam*; or, from a Dragon (as *Bochartus* thinks) which haunted this Place since the City lay desolate; for Serpents delight in such Places, especially near Fountains of Water.

And to the Dung-port,] Out of which Dung was wont to be carried out of *Jerusalem*, when it was before inhabited.

And viewed the Walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the Gates thereof were consumed with Fire.] Trying (as *Conradus Pellicanus* reasonably conjectures) whether the Foundation was still sound, and would support a new Wall laid upon it; or, whether it was rotten, and must be laid again.

Ver. 14. *Then I went on to the Gate of the Fountain,]* Either of *Siloe*, or of *Gibon*. The Wall was not so broken down, but some Part of it still remained, and the Place where the Gates were was known. See *ch.* iv. 6, 7. vi. 1.

And to the Kings Pool:] Which is generally supposed to be that which *Hezekiah* made, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 3, 30.

But there was no Place for the Beast that was under me to pass.] Being full of Rubbish, or of Water.

Ver. 15. *Then went I up in the Night by the Brook,]* The same Night he went by the Brook *Kidron*.

And viewed the Wall, and turned back, and entred by the Gate of the Valley, and so returned.] He seems not to have gone round about the whole City; for there were several other Gates which are not here mentioned; but having seen in what Condition so many Parts of the Wall were, by which he judged of the rest, he turned back into the City, and entred at the same Gate, from whence he went out, *ver.* 13.

Ver. 16. *And the Rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did,]* These Rulers (*Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were *Gentiles*, for they are distinguished from the *Jews* in the following Words, and from other Rulers among them; and therefore were the Officers of the Kings of *Persia*, who had hitherto obstructed the Work.

Neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the Priests, nor to the Nobles, nor to the Rulers,] To any of the People of the *Jews*, for he had not so much as acquainted the Priests, nor the Nobles, nor any that had Authority among them, with his Intentions.

Nor to the rest that did the Work.] Whom he intended hereafter to employ in the Work: Or, he told none of those that went with him to view the Ruins, what his Design was.

Ver. 17. *Then said I unto them, Ye see the Distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the Gates thereof are burnt with Fire,]* Not long after he took a fit Opportunity to represent to them their low Condition, and to let them understand what he intended, and had Power to undertake.

Come, and let us build up the Wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a Reproach.] Exposed to the Scorn and Insults of the People round about them.

Ver. 18. *Then I told them of the Hand of my God, which was good upon me; as also the Kings Words that he had spoken unto me.]* He acquainted them how favourable God had made the King to him, and all the Discourse he had with him, and the Commission which he had received from him.

And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their Hands for this good Work.] When they heard of the Favour of God, and of the King.

Ver. 19. *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiab the Servant the Ammonite, and Gessem the Arabian heard it,]* It is probable, *Gessem* was the King's Deputy in *Arabia*, as the two former were in *Moab* and *Ammon*: But others take them rather to have been all three great Men among the *Samaritans*.

They laughed us to Scorn, and despised us,] As Men that made a vain Attempt, which they would never be able to accomplish.

And said, What is this Thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the King?] This was the most odious Calumny they could invent, that they intended to set up for themselves, and be no longer the King's Subjects.

Ver. 20. *Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of Heaven he will prosper us;]* We have Authority for what we do from an higher Power than yours.

Therefore we his Servants will arise and build: But you have no Portion, nor Right, nor Memorial in Jerusalem.] Do not you trouble yourselves about this Matter, who have no Part, either in the Labour, or the Merit, or the Fame of it; for you are not of our Religion, and therefore may mind your own Business, and not meddle with ours.

C H A P. III.

Ver. 1. **T**HEN *Eliashib the High-Priest rose up with his Brethren the Priests,]* Now he shews, by whom, and in what Order the Wall was built; which was begun by *Eliashib*, the Grand-Child of *Jeshua* the High-Priest, (as we read, *cb. xii. 10.*) who with his Brethren gave a noble Example, in being the first that went about the Work, and built the Gate here mentioned.

And they built the Sheep-Gate,] Which was at the South-side of the City, in that Part of the Valley which looked towards the City of *David* and the Temple. The Sheep used to enter in here, which were to be sacrificed; and therefore, I suppose the Priests undertook this Part of the Work as most proper for them. *Dr. Lightfoot* hath taken a great deal of Pains to find in what Quarter these Gates were; to whom I refer the Reader in his *Chorog. Century of the Land of Israel*, Chap. xxvi.

They sanctified it, and set up the Doors of it;] When they had compleated it, they blessed it by solemn Prayers, and perhaps by Sacrifices; as the first Fruits of this pious Work. For we do not read, that any other Part, but this which they built, was sanctified. Some think, this was done, because of the Relation that this Gate had to sacred Uses; but it was rather such a Ceremony, as was imitated by other Nations, when they begun their Walls, which they commended to the Protection of their Gods. Some translate it, *they made it an excellent Structure*: Others, *they cleansed it from the Rubbish*, and the Profanation which the *Babylonians* had brought upon it; restoring it to its ancient Splendor. But our Translation, I think, is best; for it being the Priests Work, it became them to bless and sanctify it.

Even unto the Tower of Meab they sanctified it, unto the Tower of Hananeel.] They sanctified the rest of the Wall, which they built as far as the Tower of *Meab* on one Side, and the Tower of *Hananeel* on the other. But *Pellicanus* thinks, that *Meab* is not the Name of a Tower, but signifies an *Hundred*; and makes the Sense to be, they not only built the Sheep-Gate, but an hundred Cubits of the Wall to a Tower so far off from the Gate, and also to the Tower of *Hananeel*. This *Sheep-Gate* some think is the same with the *Προβατική*, mentioned *John v. 2.* which being the first that was built by the Priests of God, and particularly commended to his Blessing, had that singular Gift bestow'd upon the neighbouring Pool, that it should miraculously heal those that first entered into it every Day; and that from this Time it had this Virtue: Afterward they dedicated the whole Wall, as we read, *cb. xii. 27.*

Ver. 2. *And next unto him builded the Men of Jericho: and next to them builded Zaccur the Son of Imri.]* Whom some take for a principal Person in *Jericho*.

Ver. 3. *But the Fish-Gate did the Sons of Hassenab build,]* This was a Gate which looked towards the Sea; from whence Fish was wont to be brought, and sold here.

Who also laid the Beams thereof, and set up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.] They made a compleat Piece of Work of this Gate; to which they gave the last finishing; which was not done universally till after some Time. See *ch. vi. i. vii. i.*

Ver. 4. *And next unto them repaired Meremoth the Son of Urijah, the Son of Koz: and next unto them repaired Meshullam the Son of Berechiah, the Son of Meshezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok the Son of Baana.]* These repaired the Wall till they came to the old Gate; for there was no other Gate till they came there.

Ver. 5. *And next unto them the Tekoites repaired;]* The People of the City of Tekoa carried on the Wall with those three before-named.

But their Nobles put not their Necks to the Work of their Lord.] They were either proud, and would not stoop to this Work; or, they were negligent, and cared not whether it were done or no. By *their Lord* some understand the Leader and Head of the whole Family, who was active in it; others *Nebemiah*; and some, God himself, whose Work this was; unto which therefore well-disposed Persons, tho' ever so great, *put their Necks*; that is, laboured hard, not refusing to carry Burdens, &c.

Ver. 6. *Moreover, the old Gate repaired Jechoiada the Son of Peseah, and Meshullam the Son of Besodeiah;]* Some think, it was called *the old Gate*, because there were some Remains of it from the Times of the *Jebusites*, yea of *Melchizedeck*, by whom it was at first built.

They laid the Beams thereof, and set up the Doors thereof, and the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.] They imitated those mentioned *ver. 3.* as several others did, *ver. 13, 14, 15.*

Ver. 7. *And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the Men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the Throne of the Governor on this Side the River.]* These, and they that follow in the next Verse, repaired as far as to the Wall of the broad Street. And among these was a great Man, whose Name was *Chisse* (so *Pellicanus* translates the Word we render *the Throne*) a petty Prince in Syria, under the King of Persia; who being profelyted joined in this Work.

Ver. 8. *Next unto him repaired Uzziel the Son of Harbakhiah, of the Goldsmiths: next unto him also repaired Hananiah the Son of one of the Apothecaries, and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad Wall.]* These were two eminent Persons; one among the Goldsmiths, the other among the Perfumers; who did not build the Wall, because it was very good in this Place; but only fortified it, and made it strong. Near to this was the broad Street of the City, where there was a Market-place, for the selling of Commodities.

Ver. 9. *And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the Son of Hur, the Ruler of the half Part of Jerusalem.]* There were two principal Overseers of the Work, on the two Sides of the City: This, as some think, in that Part which was in the Tribe of Judah; and the other (*ver. 12.*) in that which was in the Tribe of Benjamin. See *ch. iv. 19.*

Ver. 10. *And next unto them repaired Jedaiah, the Son of Harumaph, even over-against his House: and next unto him repaired Hattush, the Son of Hasgabniab.]* The first of these repaired *against his House*; because that lay most convenient for him to bestow his Cost upon it; and thereby he consulted his own Safety together with the publick Good.

Ver. 11. *Malchijah the Son of Harim, and Hashub the Son of Pahath-moab, repaired the other Piece, and the Tower of the Furnaces.]* The Words we translate *the other Piece*, are the *second Measure*. But what the *first* was, we cannot tell, and therefore are ignorant of the *second*. Perhaps, half as much as the former had repaired. *The Tower of the Furnaces* is mentioned again, *ch. xii. 38.* as near to this Place. See there.

Ver. 12. *And next unto him repaired Shallum the Son of Halobesh, the Ruler of the half Part of Jerusalem,]* There was another Part mentioned before, *ver. 9.*

He and his Daughters.] Who are generally thought, either to be Heiresses, or rich Widows; who piously contributed to this Work.

Ver. 13. *The Valley-gate repaired Hanun and the Inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof, and a thousand Cubits on the Wall unto the Dung-gate.]* This was called the Valley of *Jebosaphat*, which lay between the City, and the Mount of Olives; thro' which the Brook *Kidron* ran, from the North to the South. The Gate which led to this was the East-gate; which was repaired, together with more of the Wall than any others repaired, by these Persons here mentioned.

Ver. 14. *But the Dung-gate repaired Malchiah, the Son of Rechab, the Ruler of Part of Beth-haccerem: He built it, and set up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.]* He was a great Man, who commanded Part of a City, which had its Name from the Vineyards that were there, as *Pellicanus* probably conjectures.

Ver. 15. *But the Gate of the Fountain repaired Shallum the Son of Col-bozeh, the Ruler of Part of Mizpah: He built it, and covered it, and set up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof, and the Wall of the Pool of Siloah, by the Kings Garden,]* This Man also was a great Benefactor, being a considerable Person, as the former was.

And unto the Stairs that go down from the City of David.] Which stood upon the high Hill of *Sion*; from whence they descended by Steps to *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 16. *After him repaired Nehemiah the Son of Azbuk]* Of the same Name, but not of the same Family with the Writer of this Book.

The Ruler of the half Part of Beth-zur, unto the Place over-against the Sepulchres of David,] Where *David* had a Sepulchre for himself, and for his Successors in the Kingdom.

And to the Pool that was made,] This is supposed to be the Place mentioned *2 Kings xx. 20.*

And unto the House of the Mighty.] There the King's Guard were lodged, who were all mighty Men of Valour. But we can only guess at the Sense of these Words.

Ver. 17. *After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the Son of Bani : next unto him repaired Hashbani the Ruler of the half Part of Keilah, in his Part.]* In his Street (as *Pellicanus* renders it) or with the Men of his Part or Country where he was Ruler.

Ver. 18. *After him repaired their Brethren,]* Other Levites.

Bavai the Son of Henadad, the Ruler of the half Part of Keilah.] Of the other half of the City.

Ver. 19. *And next to him repaired Ezer the Son of Jesbua, the Ruler of Mizpah, another Piece]* Or rather, *one Piece*; because another is mentioned in the next Verse.

Over against the going up to the Armoury] There is such a Place mentioned in the Forest, *Isa. xxii. 8.* which Solomon it is likely made; but this was in Jerusalem, then well known, and one of the most noted Places in the City, because here all warlike Provision was laid up.

At the turning of the Wall.] At some Corner, where the Wall turned another Way.

Ver. 20. *After him Baruch, the Son of Zabbai, earnestly repaired the other Piece,]* With great Zeal, as if he was ashamed the Work went on so slowly; or, that they should repair only one Piece, and leave the other undone.

From the turning of the Wall] From the Place before-mentioned.

Unto the Door of the House of Eliashib the High Priest.] Who had the Honour to begin this good Work, *ver. 1.*

Ver. 21. *After him repaired Meremoth the Son of Urijah, the Son of Koz, another Piece from the Door of the House of Eliashib, even to the End of the House of Eliashib.]* He carried on the Work from the Place where the other left off, from the Entrance of the House to the End of it; which being the House of a great Man, we may suppose very large.

Ver. 22. *And after him repaired the Priests, the Men of the Plain.]* Near to Jerusalem, *ch. xii. 28.*

Ver. 23. *After him]* There was some eminent Priest, who engaged others with him, as *Eliashib* had done his Brethren, *ver. 1.*

Repaired Benjamin, and Hashbub, over against their House : after him repaired Azariah the Son of Maaseiah, the Son of Ananiab, by his House.] These were some of the Tribe of Benjamin, settled in Jerusalem, who repaired over-against their own Doors, as far as their Houses extended.

Ver. 24. *After him repaired Binnui the Son of Henadad, another Piece, from the House of Azariah, unto the turning of the Wall, even unto the Corner.]* This, in all Likelihood, was another of the Tribe of Benjamin, who carried on the Wall from the Place where *Azariah* ended.

Ver. 25. *Palal the Son of Uzai, over against the turning of the Wall, and the Tower which lieth out from the Kings high House, that was by the Court of the Prison : after him, Pedaiah the Son of Parosh.]* There are so many Turnings of the Wall mentioned, that none can now give an Account of them, nor of the King's high House (which some take to have been an House built for that Prospect.) The Court of the Pri-

son is often mentioned in the Book of the Prophet *Jeremiah*.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, the Netthinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the Place over against the Water-gate toward the East, and the Tower that lieth out.]* Not only the Priests and Levites, but the meanest Persons that belonged to the House of God, inferior Officers, contributed to this Work. And the Water-gate, it is likely, was that at which these lower Ministers brought in Water for the Use of the Temple: Near to which *Ophel* was, which seems to have been a great Tower, *2 Chron. xxvii. 3.* The Tower which lay out I can give no Account of, but the next Verse tells us where it was.

Ver. 27. *After them the Tekoites repaired another Piece, over against the great Tower that lieth out, even unto the Wall of Ophel.]* The People of this Place are mentioned before, *ver. 5.* whose Nobles perhaps, who at the first withdrew themselves from this Work, lent their Help, now that they saw every Body engaged in it.

Ver. 28. *From above the Horse-gate repaired the Priests, every one over against his House.]* It was called the Horse-gate, as some think, because they went through it to water their Horses at the Brook *Kidron*: Or, there was a Place for the standing of Horses.

Ver. 29. *After them repaired Zadok the Son of Immer, over against his House : also after him repaired also Shemaiah, the Son of Shechaniah, the Keeper of the East-gate.]* It is uncertain whether he speaks of the East-gate of the City, or of the Temple: But which soever it was, it seems to have been a principal Gate, and therefore committed to the Custody of an eminent Person.

Ver. 30. *After him repaired Hananiah the Son of Shelemiah,]* Some Copies read *after me*, as if *Nehemiah* in Modesty concealed his own Work, and only intimated that he did something himself. But ours is the right Reading.

And Hanun the sixth Son of Zalaph, another Piece:] He had more Zeal it is likely than his elder Brethren, and therefore is here particularly noted as a worthy Man, of less Estate, but more Virtue than the rest of his Family.

After him repaired Meshullam the Son of Berechiah, over against his Chamber.] Which he had, I suppose, in the Temple.

Ver. 31. *After him repaired Malchiah, the Goldsmiths Son, unto the Place of the Netthinims, and of the Merchants, over against the Gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the Corner.]* It seems the Netthinims had a Part of the City assigned them for their Habitation, which was among the Merchants: Near to whom there was an House of Correction (as some think the Word *Miphkad* imports) where they visited (as the Hebrews speak) that is punished Men for their Faults.

Ver. 32. *And between the going up of the Corner unto the Sheep-gate,]* There they began (*ver. 1.*) and there they ended: Which shews that they left not off till they had compassed the whole City with a Wall, and that it was but one (as *Pellicanus* observes) not two or three, which was sufficient to preserve them from the Incursions of their Enemies.

Repaired the Goldsmiths and the Merchants.] Some will have these to have been their Names, taken at first from their Professions.

No Man can think (as the same *Pellicanus* notes) that the Names of them that repaired the Walls of *Jerusalem* were set down so diligently, as here they are, without some rational Cause for it. And the Reason was, because it was a Work of great Virtue, to love and to do Honour to their Country; a Work of Piety to restore the Holy City; a religious Thing to defend the true Worshipers of God, that they might serve him in Quietness and Safety; and a courageous Thing, in the midst of so many Enemies, to go on with this Work in a pious Confidence of the Power of God to support them. The Names therefore of such Persons deserved to be preserved and transmitted to future Generations, as a most noble Example to them.

C H A P. IV.

Ver. 1. **B**UT it came to pass, that when *Sanballat* heard that we builded the Wall, he was wroth, and took great Indignation, and mocked the Jews.] Tho' he boiled inwardly with Anger, yet he seemed to contemn that which he feared, and scoffed at the Jews.

Ver. 2. And he spake before his Brethren, and the Army of Samaria,] By his Brethren are meant the Commanders in Chief in those Parts; who mustered, I suppose, all their Forces in Samaria, as if they intended to invade the Jews, and hinder the Work they were about.

And said, What do these feeble Jews? But first he exposes them to Scorn, as a People that had no Power.

Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an End in a Day? He heard there were so many Hands at Work, as if they meant to build the Wall, and keep a Feast, and dedicate it by Sacrifice, all in one Day; and so takes an Occasion to laugh at their foolish Diligence, and the Haste they made, as if they could begin and end at once.

Will they revive the Stones out of the Heaps of the Rubbish which are burnt? He represents it as impossible they should repair the Wall, unless they could make the broken Pieces, which were also mouldred, to become whole Stones again.

Ver. 3. Now *Tobiah* the Ammonite was by him,] One of his Brethren, mentioned in the Verse before-going.

And he said, Even that which they build, if a Fox go up, he shall even break down their Stone-Wall.] Foxes abounded in that Country, especially about *Jerusalem*, since its Devastation, *Lament. v. 18.* At the Wall of which *Tobiah* jeered, saying, It was so low that those Creatures might leap over it; and so weak, that they might throw it down, or break through it. This Opinion, it is likely, made them neglect to interrupt them in their Building, till it was too late.

Ver. 4. Hear, O our God, for we are despised: and turn their Reproach upon their own Head,] He beseeches God to take such notice of their Scoffs, that as they now despised his People, so

they themselves might be laughed to Scorn, and had in Derision.

And give them for a Prey in the Land of Captivity:] And carry them far away from the Captives into some other Land.

Ver. 5. And cover not their Iniquity, and let not their Sin be blotted out from before thee:] This seems something harsh, that he should pray they might never be forgiven; but he spake by the Spirit of Prophecy, as *David* did in *Psalms* cix. they being of such a malicious and implacable Spirit against God and his People, that he foresaw they would never be capable of his Mercy, but be utterly destroyed by him. And indeed there were several Oracles upon which this Prayer was grounded, and it was confirmed by the Destruction of these Nations by the *Maccabees* and their Successors.

For they have provoked thee to Anger before the Builders.] By scoffing at them, and discouraging them in the Work, which was for God's Honour, and for the Safety of his People. And therefore it highly provoked him, that these Men should set themselves with such Spite against it.

Ver. 6. So built we the Wall; and all the Wall was joined together unto the Half thereof:] Till it was raised to the Half of its Height.

For the People had a Mind to work.] Were very much set upon it, and went about it cheerfully, notwithstanding their Jeers and Contempt.

Ver. 7. But it came to pass, that when *Sanballat*, and *Tobiah*, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the *Asbdodites*,] Some of these People were never mentioned before; and therefore this shews, that *Sanballat* endeavoured to draw all the neighbouring Nations into a Confederacy against the Jews.

Heard that the Walls of *Jerusalem* were made up, and that the Breaches began to be stopped,] It seems the *Chaldeans* had not entirely thrown down the Walls, but contented themselves to make wide Breaches and Gaps in them.

Then they were very wroth.] So incensed, that it moved them to take the following Resolution.

Ver. 8. And conspire all of them together, to come and to fight against *Jerusalem*, and to hinder it.] The last Words in the Hebrew are, to make an Error in it, that is, to put them by the Work, or to make them not know which Way to turn themselves.

Ver. 9. Nevertheless we made our Prayer unto our God, and set a Watch against them Day and Night, because of them.] They committed themselves to the Protection of the Almighty, whose Servants they were, keeping a constant Watch, that they might not be surprized; for they knew them to be very vigilant to do Mischief.

Ver. 10. And *Judah* said, The Strength of the Bearers of Burdens is decayed,] They had wrought so long and so hard, that some of the Jews told him the Labourers were quite spent.

And there is much Rubbish, so that we are not able to build the Wall.] There was still a great deal of Rubbish remaining, more than they were able to remove; and therefore they must desist, at least for the present, from building the Wall.

Y y y y

Ver. 11.

Ver. 11. *And our Adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the Midst among them, and slay them, and cause the Work to cease.]* They pretended also to have Intelligence, that the forenamed Enemies did not intend to appear with an Army before Jerusalem, but to march so secretly, that they should have no Notice of their Approach till they saw them in the City, and put them to the Sword.

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten Times,]* But there were some Jews who were Neighbours to that People that found out their Designs, and came to inform them of it a great many Times: For *ten Times* signifies a great many in Scripture. See Gen. xxi. 7.

From all Places whence ye shall return unto us, they will be upon you.] The Words in the Hebrew are no more than these, *from all Places whence they return unto us*, (there being no Words answering to those, *they will be upon you*,) if any Words be added, they should be *they informed us of our Danger*.

Ver. 13. *Therefore set I in the lower Places behind the Wall,]* Where the Wall was not yet raised to its just Height, Ver. 6.

And on the higher Places,] Where it was compleatly finished.

I even set the People after their Families, with their Swords, their Spears, and their Bows.] With such Weapons as they were furnished withal.

Ver. 14. *And I looked, and rose up,]* When he saw how they were disposed, he rose up, and made this Speech to them.

And said unto the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the rest of the People, Be not ye afraid of them: Remember the LORD which is great and terrible, and fight for your Brethren, your Sons and your Daughters, your Wives, and your Houses.] All was at Stake, therefore he exhorts them to be valiant, trusting in God, who was stronger than all their Enemies.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass when our Enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their Counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the Wall, every one unto his Work.]* When they heard their Plot was discovered, and they had no Hope to surprize us, but we were ready to receive them, they laid aside their Designs, and we went on with ours.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass from that Time forth, that the half of my Servants wrought in the Work, and the other half of them held both the Spears, the Shields, and the Bows, and the Habergeons;]* But lest their Enemies should imagine they were secure, and had quite laid aside their Arms, and so might resume their Enterprize, he ordered, that while half of his own Servants wrought upon the Walls, another half should stand by with Weapons ready to put into their Hands, if there were Occasion.

And the Rulers were behind all the House of Judah.] The rest, I suppose, followed this Example; and the Rulers stood at their Backs to encourage them, and put them forward in their Work.

Ver. 17. *They which builded on the Wall, and they that bare Burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his Hands wrought in the Work, and with the other Hand held a Weapon.]* That

is, they were well appointed for both, to build and to fight. For it is a figurative Speech, it not being possible for them to work if both Hands had not been at Liberty. And the next Verse saith, their Swords were by their Sides.

Ver. 18. *For the Builders, every one had his Sword girded by his Side, and so builded:]* This expounds the foregoing Words.

And he that sounded the Trumpet was by me.] To give the Alarm, if need should be, and to call them unto him for Orders. It appears by this, that he was continually with them while they wrought.

Ver. 19. *And I said unto the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the rest of the People, The Work is great and large, and we are separated upon the Wall, one far from another.]* In several Quarters of it, some of which were at a good Distance from others.

Ver. 20. *In what Place therefore ye hear the Sound of the Trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.]* For while they lay scattered they could not oppose their Enemies successfully, but being united with him, and under his Direction and Conduct, he bids them not doubt of God's Protection.

Ver. 21. *So we laboured in the Work; and half of them held the Spears.]* For the Use of every Man, if there should be Occasion.

From the Rising of the Morning till the Stars appeared.] All the Day long, from Break of Day till it was quite Night.

Ver. 22. *Likewise at the same Time said I unto the People, Let every one with his Servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the Night they may be a Guard to us, and labour in the Day.]* It is likely, that many of them at Night went into the Suburbs, or neighbouring Villages, and lodged there; but he would have them all lodge in Jerusalem, for the greater Security of the City in the Night, and that they might be more ready to work in the Morning.

Ver. 23. *So neither I, nor my Brethren, nor my Servants, nor the Men of the Guard which followed me, none of us put off our Clothes.]* He, and his Kindred, and Family, and Guard, gave them a noble Example; for none of them put off their Clothes when they went to Bed, but lay in them, that they might be more ready to fight if any Assault was made on the City.

Saving that every one put them off for washing.] These last Words are variously expounded by Interpreters, and the fewest approve of our Translation. Rabbi Solomon repeats the Word *not*; *They put not off their Clothes, no not for washing.* The Hebrew Word is *Water*, which some here take for *the Water of the Feet*, as the Hebrews speak, and make the Sense to be, *no not when they made Water.* De Dieu, quite contrary, except only to make Water. But it is a more simple Sense, every Man had his Sword ready when he made Water. So the Word *Schicho* may be rendered, as we translate it in the Margin, *every Man went with his Weapon for Water.* But Grotius follows our Translation, and takes these Words for an Exception to what went before: And the plain Meaning is, they put off their Garments only for those Ablutions, which

which the Law required, or Custom had introduced.

C H A P. V.

Ver. 1. **A**ND *there was a great Cry of the People, and of their Wives, against their Brethren the Jews.]* At this Time there was a grievous Complaint of the Poor against their rich Brethren: For tho' they were cured of their Idolatry by their Captivity, yet they were not cured of their other Sins, but loved strange Women, as we read before in the Book of *Ezra*; and were so covetous, that they oppressed the Poor and Needy, and this at a Time, when their Enemies threatned the Destruction of them all. But this was the more heinous Crime, because the twentieth of *Artaxerxes*, wherein this was done, began about the End of a Sabbatick Year, (as *Dr. Alix* observes) which raised the Cry of the Poor to a greater Height against their Creditors, who exacted their Debts of them contrary to the Law, *Deut. xv. 2.* which was read to them publickly in such a Year, *Deut. xxxi. 12.* For it was of such Moment, that it moved *Nehemiah* to make the *Jews* take a solemn Oath that they would observe this Law, and release all the Debts that were owing to them in this Year, *c. x.* of this Book, *v. 31.*

Ver. 2. *For there were that said, We, our Sons, and our Daughters are many:]* They had numerous Families.

Therefore we take up Corn for them, that we may eat, and live.] They had no Way to keep them from starving, but by buying Corn for them at unreasonable Rates; which the Rich demanded, when they saw them in such Necessity, that they must pay what they asked, or die.

Ver. 3. *Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our Lands, Vineyards, and Houses, that we might buy Corn, because of the Dearth.]* There had been a great Scarcity for Want of Rain; which God denied, because they minded building their own Houses more than his, as we read *Haggai i. 9, 10, 11.* Now the Effects of such Droughts caused among the People great Scarcity of Provisions, in which the Rich had no Compassion on their poor Brethren, but forced them to sell all they had for Bread.

Ver. 4. *There were also that said, We have borrowed Money for the Kings Tribute, and that upon our Lands and Vineyards.]* They do not complain that they were constrained to borrow Money, but that they could not have it without taking it up on Usury, as it appears from *ver. 7.* which was contrary to the Law of God, *Exod. xxii. 25, &c.* otherwise they could not have paid their Tribute to the King of *Persia*, who laid it upon all his Subjects every where, *Ezra iv. 13. vii. 24.*

Ver. 5. *Yet now our Flesh is as the Flesh of our Brethren, our Children as their Children:]* They represent very pathetically that there was no Difference between them and their Brethren, but that they were poor, and the other rich; for they were all *Jews* of the same Stock, from the same Original, all alike circumcised; so that by Nature, and by the Favour of God, they were every Way the same, and therefore ought

to enjoy the same Freedom that they and their Children did.

And lo, we bring into Bondage our Sons and our Daughters, to be Servants,] In case of great Necessity this was lawful, *Exod. xxi. 7.* But they were very void of Compassion, who forced their Brethren to do a Thing so much against Nature.

And some of our Daughters are brought unto Bondage already,] Some of the tender Sex, who were least able to endure Hardship, they had been already forced to part withal.

Neither is it in our Power to redeem them: for other Men have our Lands and Vineyards.] Their Condition was very lamentable, for none would lend them Money freely, and to pay their Usury, they were forced to sell their Children, whom they had not Power to redeem, because their Lands were mortgaged to those Oppressors; so that they were in a worse Condition than when they were in *Babylon*, being not in so much Danger to be devoured by their cruel Neighbours, (who sought their Destruction) as by their barbarous Friends and Neighbours.

Ver. 6. *And I was very angry when I heard their Cry, and these Words.]* It could not but move his Indignation, to hear them complain one of another, but much more when he heard the Reason.

Ver. 7. *Then I consulted with myself,]* It is not safe to do any Thing in a Fit of Anger; but coolly to consider and deliberate what is fit to be done.

And I rebuked the Nobles, and the Rulers,] Whom he did not fear to reprove severely, when he found them in Fault.

And said unto them, You exact Usury, every one of his Brother.] And that a very heavy one, such as was used among the Heathen, called, *Centesima*, the hundredth Part, *ver. 11.* which was twelve per Cent.

And I set a great Assembly against them.] That he might put them to the greater Shame. For this great Assembly I take to be the whole Body of the People, with their Judges, as *Bertram* observes, *De Repub. Jud. p. 171.* See *Ezra x. 8, 14.*

Ver. 8. *And I said unto them, We, after our Ability,]* Either he speaks of himself in the Plural Number, as great Men are wont to do; or he means, he, with *Ezra*, and such like Lovers of their Country, had done what follows.

Have redeemed our Brethren the Jews, who were sold unto the Heathen;] Had done their utmost to deliver the *Jews* out of the Captivity of *Babylon*; whereby they were restored both to their own Country, and to their Liberty: And perhaps they had with their own Money procured the Freedom of such as were Slaves to some of the *Babylonians*; who would not part with them, when they desired to go to *Jerusalem*, unless they were paid the Price of them, being their own proper Goods.

And will you even sell your Brethren?] For that they might expect, since their Parents could not redeem them.

Or shall they be sold unto us?] Must I redeem them out of your Hands, as I have helped to redeem some out of *Babylon*?

Then they held their Peace, and found nothing to answer.] There was such an exprefs Law of God againſt them, *Deut. xxiii. 19.* that they had nothing to reply; and therefore were ſilent. becauſe they could neither deny the Faſt, nor were able to juſtify it.

Ver. 9. *And I ſaid, It is not good that ye do:]* This encouraged him to proceed in his Reprehenſion, and to tell them, that they had committed a great Sin: For that's the Meaning of, *It is not good:* A ſoft Form of Speech, uſed when they mean it is very bad, *Prov. xvi. 29.* and many other Places.

Ought ye not to walk in the Fear of our God,] Being ſo lately delivered by him from Oppreſſion, and having ſo many Enemies about them, to obſerve what they did.

Because of the Reproach of the Heathen our Enemies ?] Who might juſtly upbraid them with Inhumanity; and thereupon reproach their Religion.

Ver. 10. *I likewiſe, and my Brethren, and my Servants, might exact of them Money and Corn:]* As a Reward of their Care and Diligence in the publick Service.

I pray you let us leave off this Uſury.] But what then would become of the poor People, who were too much oppreſſed already? And therefore he beſeeches them to leave off this Uſury, ſeeing he and his rather waved their own Right, than demanded any Thing for their Labour and Toil in the Diſcharge of their Offices.

Ver. 11. *Reſtore, I pray you, to them, even this Day, their Lands, their Vineyards, their Oliveyards, and their Houſes,]* Tho' they had lent Money upon the Security of thoſe Lands, &c. yet ſince they were the Poſſeſſions of the Poor, who were reduced to great Straits, and could not pay them, he beſeeches them to reſtore them, and that without Delay.

Alſo the hundredth Part of the Money, and of the Corn, the Wine, and the Oyl, that ye exact of them.] The hundredth Part was an Uſury then practiſed in thoſe Countries, as afterwards among the *Romans*; which was the hundredth Part of what was lent every Month; ſo that every Year they paid the eighth Part of the Principal. Thus 'tis commonly ſaid. But *Salmaſius* hath obſerved, that in the Eaſtern Countries there were never any Laws to determine what Intereſt ſhould be taken for Money lent, for a Day, or a Week, or a Month, or a Year, (for there were all theſe Sorts of Uſury) but every one was left to demand what he pleaſed; and according to what was agreed, they paid for what was borrowed. Therefore we cannot certainly tell whether this was heavy or light Uſury. But among the *Greeks* and *Romans* there was a Meaſure ſet, (as he notes in his Book *De Jemore Trapezitico*) and *ἑκατοστή*, the hundredth Part, was among the *Greeks* the loweſt Uſury; tho' it was more or leſs in ſeveral Ages, as he there ſhews, and in his Book *De Modis Uſurarum*; where he notes the Difference between the *Greeks* and *Romans* in this Matter, *Cap. vi. p. 230, &c.*

Ver. 12. *Then ſaid they, We will reſtore them,]* They readily conſented to reſtore their Lands, Vineyards, and Houſes.

And will require nothing of them;] Demand no Intereſt for the Money.

So will we do as thou ſayeſt.] They ſo entirely agreed to what he deſired, that it made a Kind of Jubilee among the People; for, no Doubt, there was great Joy when this was done.

Then I called the Priests, and took an Oath of them, that they ſhould do according to this Promise.] While they were in this good Mind, he called the Priests, and made them ſwear in their Preſence, who were Witneſs to it, that they would keep their Word.

Ver. 13. *Alſo I ſhook my Lap, and ſaid, So God ſhake out every Man from his Houſe, and from his Labour, that performeth not this Promise, even thus be he ſhaken out and emptied.]* He prayed God that they might loſe all they had, who did not make good his Promise; and predicted their Poverty by an external Sign, as the Manner of the Prophets was to do: For folding up the Skirts of his Garment, and then ſcattering them abroad, he repreſented how God would caſt them out of their Poſſeſſions, and the Fruit of their Labours, who did not obſerve this Oath.

And all the Congregation ſaid, Amen, and praised the LORD.] God ſo wrought upon the People's Hearts, that even they who had been guilty of taking Uſury, conſented to this Imprecation, and wiſhed the ſame Miſchief to themſelves, if they did not do as he required: And which was more, they praised God, who had given them ſuch a Governor, and put into them this good Mind, to ſubmit unto him.

And the People did according to this Promise.] Made an immediate Reſtitution of what had been mortgaged to them, and releaſed them of their Obligation for Money.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, from the Time that I was appointed to be their Governor in the Land of Judah, from the twentieth Year, even unto the two and thirtieth Year of Artaxerxes the King, that is, twelve Years,]* All which Time he was not in *Judea*; but he ordered him, who was his Deputy, in his Abſence, to do as he did.

I and my Brethren] He and his Domeſticks; or, thoſe; who, as I ſaid, he deputed in his Room.

Have not eaten the Bread of the Governor.] Taken the Allowances which were made to the Governors, appointed by the Kings of *Persia*, to provide them a Table: Which it was but reaſonable they ſhould have; that they who did the publick Buſineſs ſhould be maintained at the publick Charge. But he would not do that which was lawful, when he ſaw it would be burdensome to his Countrymen, and therefore lived upon his own Eſtate which he had in *Judea*, and upon the Salary which he had as Cup-bearer to the King of *Persia*, in whoſe Service, it is likely, he had enriched himſelf before he came to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 15. *But the former Governors that had been before me, were chargeable unto the People, and had taken of them Bread and Wine, beſide forty Shekels of Silver,]* Who theſe were, he doth not ſay, but ſpares their Names; it being ſufficient to declare he did not imitate them, whoſoever they were. Nor doth he relate how much

much Bread and Wine they exacted, but only that they had besides, forty Shekels of Silver every Day, I suppose, to make Provision of other Things for their Table. But from these Words *Scaliger* concludes, that before *Nehemiah* and *Ezra* there had been other Governors placed over them by the Kings of *Persia*. And if we may believe the *Jewish Annals*, compil'd by the Author of *Seder Olam Zuta*, the first Governor, *Zerubbabel*, returning from *Jerusalem* to *Babylon*, died there, and was succeeded in his Government of *Judea* by his Son *Mesbulum*, and after him by his Grandson *Chananiab*.

Yea, even their Servants bare Rule over the People:] They connived at the Exactions of their Servants, who demanded what they pleased.

But so did not I, because of the Fear of God.] It was not Vain-glory that made him thus generous, but his Love to God, and to his Country: For he loved Religion better than Riches, and took not his own Due, that the People might serve God more chearfully.

Ver. 16. *Yea, also I continued in the Work of this Wall.]* And all this while he took as much Pains as any of them, in building the Wall of *Jerusalem*.

Neither bought we any Land:] Which they might have done of the Poor at an easy Price, if they had desired Wealth; but they would not make any Advantage to themselves of other Mens Necessities.

And all my Servants were gathered thither unto the Work.] They were constantly employed also in the same Work, and received no Pay for their Labour, tho' it could not be done without Neglect of his private Business.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, there were at my Table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and Rulers, besides those that came unto us from among the Heathen that are about us.]* This was the greater Expence, because they were not inferior People that were entertained at his Table, but Persons of Quality among the *Jews*, and Strangers who came about Business, and, perhaps, brought him Intelligence concerning the State of the neighbouring Heathen, and of their Designs.

Ver. 18. *Now that which was prepared for me daily, was one Ox, and six choice Sheep; also Fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten Days, Store of all Sorts of Wine:]* This shews that he kept a noble House, as we speak; and, indeed, it was very becoming a great Man to entertain great Persons, both of his own Country and Strangers, with Magnificence.

Yet for all this required I not the Bread of the Governor, because the Bondage was heavy upon this People.] They could not without great Hardship maintain themselves.

Ver. 19. *Think upon me, my God, for Good, according to all that I have done for this People.]* He expected his Reward only from God, who he hoped would shew him the same Kindness that he had done for his People. There is no Reason to think he speaks too much of himself, and his own worthy Acts; for it was no more than was necessary in such a State of Things, that Posterity might be furnished with an excellent Example of extraordinary Virtue; and no more than *St. Paul* was constrained to speak of

himself in his Epistle to the *Corinthians*; of whom he would take nothing, that he might stop the Mouths of false Apostles, and covetous People. See *chap. xiii. 22.*

C H A P. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiab, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our Enemies]* Mentioned, *chap. iv. 7.*

Heard that I had builded the Wall, and that there was no Breach left therein; (though at that Time I had not set up the Doors upon the Gates)] Not upon all of them, tho' some had been set up at the Charge of particular Persons, *ch. iii. 3, 6, 13, &c.*

Ver. 2. *That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together]* Either to consult about the common Good of their several Provinces, wherein they governed, (of which perhaps they pretended they were to give an Account to their Master) or to establish a Friendship and good Correspondence one with another, or some such Purpose.

In some one of the Villages in the Plain of Ono:] A Place in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *chap. xi. 35.* and 2 *Chron. viii. 12.* see there.

But they thought to do me Mischief.] He would not trust them, suspecting they intended to kill him; of which, perhaps, he had received some private Intelligence.

Ver. 3. *And I sent Messengers unto them, saying,]* He shewed so much Respect to them, as not to return an Answer by those whom they sent to him, but dispatched a Messenger of his own to them.

I am doing a great Work, so that I cannot come down: Why should the Work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?] He did not know any Business they could have with him of such great Concernment, as that which he had in Hand, and therefore he would not put a Stop to it, to confer with them: This was one Reason, but not the only one for his Refusal.

Ver. 4. *Yet they sent unto me four Times after this Sort;]* They were restlessly bent upon his Destruction, and therefore importuned him often to give them a Meeting: For they thought, I suppose, if they did not take this Opportunity to overthrow what he had done, before he set up the Doors upon the Gates, they should never be able to enter the City afterwards.

And I answered them after the same Manner.] He still persisted constantly to give no other Answer; whereby they might understand he was resolved to finish the Work.

Ver. 5. *Then sent Sanballat his Servant unto me in like Manner, the fifth Time,]* There is no Mention of *Tobiab* in all the foregoing Negotiation, and now *Geshem* is left out, and *Sanballat* alone sent him a Message, pretending, it is likely, special Respect and Kindness unto him, in informing him what was laid to his Charge: Certain it is, he was the great Contriver and Manager of all the Mischief intended against him.

With an open Letter in his Hand:] Before, the Message was delivered by Word of Mouth, but

but now by Letter; yet open, that every one might see of what he was accused.

Ver. 6. *Wherein was written; It is reported among the Heathen,]* The Report was spread among the Nations thereabout.

And Gashmu] The same, I suppose, with Geshem, mentioned, ver. 1.

Saith it,] Undertakes to prove it.

That thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which Cause thou buildest the Wall, that thou mayest be their King, according to these Words.] That he might establish his Authority, and reign over them, according to the common Report.

Ver. 7. *And thou hast also appointed Prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a King in Judah:]* This was cunningly suggested, that he might not think there was any Prophet on his Side; as indeed there was, for he had corrupted Shemaiah, as it presently follows.

And now shall it be reported to the King, according to these Words: Come now therefore, and let us take Counsel together.] How they should wipe off this Suspicion, if it should be put into the King's Mind, as he told him it certainly would.

Ver. 8. *Then I sent unto him, saying,]* In an open Letter, I suppose, that every Body might see it.

There are no such Things done as thou sayest,] Nothing done to give a Jealousy of a Rebellion, nor any Prophet that encouraged it.

But thou feignest them out of thine own Heart.] He had invented this Report, to defame Nehemiah, without any Ground for it.

Ver. 9. *For they all made us afraid, saying, Their Hands shall be weakened from the Work, that it be not done: now therefore, O God, strengthen my Hands.]* Their Business was to contrive false Stories, to put the Jews in Fear; being confident they would be discouraged by such Reports, as some were: Therefore he beseeches God to strengthen him that he might support others.

Ver. 10. *Afterward I came unto the House of Shemaiah the Son of Delaiah, the Son of Mehetabeel,]* Who was a Prophet, (it appears from ver. 12.) whom, it is likely, Nehemiah took to be his Friend, and therefore went to consult and advise with him at his House.

Who was shut up;] Out of Fear, he pretended; and by this Action would have had Nehemiah to understand what he himself should do for his own Security; for it was the Manner of the Prophets to instruct the People by Actions and Signs, as well as by Words. But others think he shut himself up, that is, retired, as an holy Man from the Affairs of the World, to spend his Time in Meditation and Prayer, in some of the Chambers of the Temple; whether he advised Nehemiah to retire, and to take Sanctuary there, from the great Dangers to which he was exposed.

And he said, Let us meet together in the House of God, within the Temple, and let us shut the Doors of the Temple; for they will come to slay thee,] By the Temple he means the outward Court of it, where he had a Chamber; whether, as a Friend in whom Nehemiah confided, he prayed him to come, that they might meet and

consult together how to preserve Jerusalem, and where he might be safe himself from his Enemies; who could not easily enter in there, it being a strong Place, and besides privileged by its Holiness; unto which even Heathens, perhaps, might have such Regard, as not to violate it; whereas the Gates of Jerusalem were not yet in such a Condition, as to keep them out: By this Means he hoped Nehemiah would become contemptible, when the People saw his Cowardice, and the Jews would be disheartened, as much as their Enemies took Courage. And, perhaps, he intended, with some Priests, his Confederates, to seize on him, and deliver him into the Hands of Sanballat. At least, it would give some Countenance to the Calumny he had raised, of his affecting to be King; because he fled from his Work, and durst not stand upon his Integrity. Shemaiah also might think hereby to draw him in to offend God, by coming into that Court where the Priests only might come, and where it is supposed this Prophet now was.

Yea, in the Night will they come to slay thee.] I take the Meaning to be, even this very Night will they fall upon thee; therefore consult thy Safety, by fleeing hither.

Ver. 11. *And I said, Should such a Man as I flee?]* Who am a Governor, and ought to give a good Example of undaunted Courage; and have professed to put great Confidence in God; and hitherto been marvellously preserved by him, and assisted in his Undertaking.

And who is there, that being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his Life? I will not go in.] There might have been Colour for this Advice, if Jerusalem had been an open Place, without any Walls, without armed Men in it, or that had no Courage to defend it; but they had appeared on the Walls to defend it, (ch. iv. 13.) and being so well appointed, he was resolved till to rely on God, and on their Fidelity and Valour; and not be so base as to desert them, till they deserted him; which they might well do, if they saw him flee from them for Fear.

Ver. 12. *And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him, but that he pronounced this Prophecy against me:]* Not to secure him, but to betray him; as he plainly discovered in a little Time; which shewed, there was no such Danger, as this false Prophet pretended.

For Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.] Tobiah was not idle all this Time, but it's likely invented this Plot, to bribe this Man to be a false Prophet: Which perhaps was discovered to Nehemiah by some undoubted Prophets of God, who were on their Side.

Ver. 13. *Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin,]* That they might draw him to offend God, by distrusting his Care of him; and dishonour himself by base Cowardice.

And that they might have Matter for an evil Report, that they might reproach me.] As a Man guilty of what they accused him.

Ver. 14. *My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their Works,]* Their Calumnies, and malicious Contrivances, and foul Practices, which he hoped God would take a Time to punish.

And

And on the Prophets Noadiak, and the rest of the Prophets that would have put me in fear.] The wicked Temper of this People is very wonderful, who had already got false Prophets among them, both Men and Women, whom *Nehemiah* did not think fit as a Judge to punish, but left them to the Judgment of God. Nor do we read that he informed the King of *Persia* of the foul Dealings of these Men, (which certainly he would have punished,) but prayed God to reward them after their Deeds: For he would have all know that he depended wholly upon the Power of God to enable him to perfect this Work, and not upon the Help of human Force.

Ver. 15. *So the Wall was finished in the twenty and fifth Day of the Month Elul, in fifty and two Days.]* Which may seem incredible to those who do not reflect what a great Number of People (who were not hired, but voluntarily) engaged in this Work, and how full they were of Zeal, and that the Foundation of the Wall was not raised by the *Chaldeans*, nay, there were some Pieces of it standing, only great Gaps being made in it. And other Histories acquaint us with the like Diligence; particularly *Arrianus* and *Curtius* relate, that *Alexander* the Great built the Walls of *Alexandria* (which was seven Miles in Compass) in the Space of twenty Days.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass that when all our Enemies heard thereof, and all the Heathen that were about us saw these Things,]* When they heard how all the Designs of their Enemies were disappointed, and saw *Jerusalem* was built and flourished.

They were much cast down in their own Eyes; for they perceived that this Work was wrought of our God.] Being finished in so short a Time, beyond all Expectation, and in the Midst of great Fears and sad Apprehensions.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, in those Days the Nobles of Judah sent many Letters unto Tobiah, and the Letters of Tobiah came unto them.]* To add to all the other Wickedness of this Nation, that were false Brethren among their great Men, who held a Correspondence with their most pestilent Enemies against *Nehemiah*.

Ver. 18. *For there were many in Judah sworn unto him,]* Against the Interest of their Country, and of their Religion; to such a Height of Impiety were many arrived.

Because he was the Son-in-law of Shechaniah the Son of Arab; and his Son Johanan had taken the Daughter of Meshullam the Son of Berechiah.] So dangerous were Marriages with Foreigners, which *Ezra* therefore had great Reason to make void; for by these Alliances they were engaged in wicked Designs against their Country.

Ver. 19. *Also they reported his good Deeds before me,]* To such an Impudence were they arrived, that they highly commended him as a very worthy Man in the Presence of *Nehemiah*, who knew so much of his Wickedness.

And uttered my Words to him:] Or informed him of all that *Nehemiah* did. For so we translate in the Margin, *Matters*, not Words.

And Tobiah sent Letters to put me in fear.] Still continued such Practices as are mentioned, Ver. 6. that if it were possible they might put him into

such Fear, as would move him to do something to disgrace himself.

C H A P. VII.

Ver. 1. *N*OW it came to pass when the Wall was built, and I had set up the Doors, and the Porters, and the Singers, and the Levites were appointed,] The Porters were to attend the Gates; but what the Levites and the Singers had to do there, is not easily resolved. Perhaps they were to be ready against the Time that the Wall should be dedicated, which is mentioned Chap. xii.

Ver. 2. *That I gave my Brother Hanani,]* Who was the Man that came from *Jerusalem* to *Shushan*, to acquaint him with the deplorable Condition of the City, and implore his Help, Chap. i. 2.

And Hananiab the Ruler of the Palace,] So the House where *Nehemiah* dwelt is called, because he was Governor for the King, and a Kind of Viceroy, who did all the King's Business, and here gave Audience to all People, as the King was wont to do in his Palace.

Charge over Jerusalem:] He made *Hanani*, I suppose, principal Governor over *Jerusalem*, and *Hananiab* was his Assistant and Deputy.

(For he was a faithful Man, and feared God above many.)] He saith nothing of *Hanani*, who was well known to be zealous for God and for his Country, by the Journey he took to *Shushan*, (which I before mentioned,) but he gives the Reason why he joined *Hananiab* with him, because he knew he might be trusted, being a Man of Conscience, who acted out of religious Principles, which a great many in those Days did not. The Reason why he took this Care for the City, it is likely, was, because he himself was returning to *Shushan*, to give the King an Account of the State of Affairs in *Judea*, and therefore placed such Men in *Jerusalem*, as he knew would faithfully secure it in his Absence.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto them, Let not the Gates of Jerusalem be opened, until the Sun be hot;]* Till it had been risen a good while, that they might see clearly round about them, and that all the People might be ready in case of any Danger.

And while they stand by, let them shut the Doors, and bar them:] And at Night he charges them to stand by and see the Gates shut and barred in their Presence. Or, as some expound it, they should not suffer any Man to stir till they shut the Gates, lest thro' Carelessness they should chance to be left open. So *De Dieu* renders the Words, *While the Standers-by shut the Gates, hold them fast;* that is, he gave them Power to keep all there present; and not let them go away till this was done.

And appoint Watches of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his Watch, and every one to be over-against his House.] The Gates being shut, he charges them to set the Watch in proper Places; every one keeping Watch in that Part which was next to his own House.

Ver. 4. *Now the City was large and great:]* And therefore required many Watches.

But the People were few therein,] In Comparison with the Bigness of the City.

And the Houses were not builded.] That is, not all that had been in former Times, but a great deal of Ground still lay waste.

Ver. 5. *And my God put into mine Heart, to gather together the Nobles, and the Rulers, and the People,]* Whatsoever good Motion came into his Mind, he ascribed it to God, and not to his own prudent Consideration; though that was employed in this Business. For without God we can do nothing, who ought therefore to be in all our Thoughts.

That they might be reckoned by Genealogy:] That by knowing of what Family they were, and where they formerly dwelt, he might recal those of them whose Habitations had heretofore been in *Jerusalem*, to come and settle there again, now that the Wall was built, and they might dwell there in Safety.

And I found a Register of the Genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein,] The Words following.

Ver. 6. *These are the Children of the Province that went up out of the Captivity, of those that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jerusalem, and to Judah, every one unto his City;]* These are the very Words which we read in the second Chapter of *Ezra*, Ver. 1, &c. from whence he seems to have transcribed them, and added something to them.

Ver. 7. *Who came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nebemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nabamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nebum, Bananah; the Number, I say, of the Men of the People of Israel, was this;]* He that is here called *Azariah*, is called there *Saraiah*; and there are some other small Differences in the Names, but all the same, only here *Nabamani* is added.

Ver. 8. *The Children of Parosh, two thousand an hundred seventy and two.]* I shall not transcribe all this Genealogy, concerning which I have nothing to observe, but that in some few Things it differs from that in *Ezra*. See my *Annotations* on *Ezra* ii. 5. There are also some Families named here which are not in *Ezra*, as in Ver. 22. and Ver. 48, 49, 51, 52. which are all omitted in *Ezra*. For it must be considered, that one of these Accounts was taken by *Ezra* in *Babylon*, the other by *Nebemiah* in *Judea*. And therefore it is no Wonder that a greater Number are sometimes mentioned in *Nebemiah* than in *Ezra*; for in the first Account that was taken of them, many were ignorant of their Genealogy; but before the last, the Book of their Genealogy was found, and yet in the whole Number the two Accounts agree, though in the particular Sums they vary. Compare Ver. 66. of this Chapter with the second of *Ezra*, Ver. 64. of which Dr. *Lightfoot* gives this Account in his *Chronicle of the Times of the Old Testament*, p. 146. *The Matter is to be conceived and apprehended thus; That Nebemiah found that List and Catalogue of those that came up in the first of Cyrus, as it was taken then; and that he called over the Names of the Families as they lay in Order there: He observed the Order of that List in calling and listing them; but he took the Number of them, as they were now when he num-*

bred them. And some Families were now more in Number than they were when that first was made, and some were less; and some that were in that List, were not to be found now. For some had more of the same Stock come out of Babel since the first Numbering; and some that had come up at first, and were then numbred, were now gone back. And so he observed by comparing that List, and the present Number, how the Plantation in Judea had gone forward or backward, increased or decayed since the first Return.

Ver. 65. *And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy Things till there stood up a Priest with Urim and Thummim.]* It is the Opinion of *Jacobus Capellus*, that *Zerubbabel* is here meant by the *Tirshatha* in *Ezra* ii. 63. Whosoever he was, he expresses his Hope that God might in Time restore the *Urim* and *Thummim*, (as he had done the Nation,) and so give Answer about obscure and difficult Matters, as he had done in former Ages. But till then these Priests were not admitted to partake of the most holy Things, because it did not appear by good Proof, that they were of the Family of the Priests; and not to appear, and not to be, are the same Thing in Law. But the *Talmudists*, as the same Person observes, interpret these Words as if it had been said, *Till the Dead rise, or till the Messiah come*. For after the first Temple was destroyed, the Cities of the Levites, with their Suburbs, were wanting; and so were *Urim* and *Thummim*, and the Kings of the House of *Judah*. See his *Historia Exot.* & *Sacra*, ad A. M. 3557.

Ver. 70. *And some of the Chief of the Fathers gave unto the Work: The Tirshatha gave to the Treasure a thousand Drums of Gold, fifty Bajons, five hundred and thirty Priests Garments.*

Ver. 71. *And some of the Chief of the Fathers gave to the Treasure of the Work twenty thousand Drums of Gold, and two thousand and two hundred Pounds of Silver.*

Ver. 72. *And that which the rest of the People gave was twenty thousand Drums of Gold, and two thousand Pounds of Silver, and threescore and seven Priests Garments.]* The Offering mentioned in these three Verses, was made by different Persons from those who are said to have offered in *Ezra* ii. 68, 69. and therefore no wonder the Gold and Silver, and other Things offered, were different.

Ver. 73. *So the Priests and the Levites, and the Porters and the Singers, and some of the People, and the Nethinims, and all Israel dwelt in their Cities;]* These are the very same Words with those in the second Chapter of *Ezra*, and the last Verse; and in both Places it is said, *All Israel dwelt in their Cities*. Which though it be chiefly to be understood of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, yet it is evident some of the ten Tribes did return with them, according to those Prophecies, *Jer.* l. 4. *Zeck.* viii. 13. And indeed there were many of the *Israelites*, that did live in the Tribe of *Judah* before the Captivity, 2 *Chron.* x. 17. xi. 16.

And when the seventh Month came, the Children of Israel were in their Cities.] When all the Business before named was over, the People were sent back, by *Nebemiah's* Direction, to their several Cities, unto which they belonged: where

where they remained till the seventh Month came; which was five Days after the Wall was finished, on the twenty fifth Day of the sixth Month, *Chap. vi. 15.*

C H A P. VIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND all the People gathered themselves together as one Man,] In this Month was the first great Feast that fell out after the building of the Wall; as it was just after their first Company returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, *Ezra iii. 1.*

Into the Street that was before the Water-gate,] Which Gate is mentioned before, *Chap. iii. 26.* the Street before which being very capacious, they all might meet there; for the Court of the Temple was not large enough to contain such a Multitude.

And they spake unto Ezra the Scribe] This, no doubt, is the same Person mentioned in the foregoing Book; who had been at Babylon, it is thought, since his first coming into Judea, and was now returned; beholding with great Joy the Wall of Jerusalem built, as before he had seen the Temple.

To bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.] They called to Mind that Place in Deuteronomy, (*Chap. xxxi. 10, 11, &c.*) where God requires the Law to be read publicly every seventh Year in the Feast of Tabernacles, which was appointed to be kept in this Month. This, no doubt, Ezra was ready to perform; but such was the forward Zeal of the People at this Time, that they prevented him by their pious Intreaties, that he would observe that Law.

Ver. 2. *And Ezra the Priest]* So he is called, as before the Scribe; both of these Titles being put together in the foregoing Book.

Brought the Law before the Congregation, both of Men and Women,] For the City being restored and re-inhabited, the next Thing that was proper to be done, was to instruct them in those Laws whereby they were to live.

And all that could hear with Understanding,] That were not mere Children.

Upon the first Day of the seventh Month.] Which was not the Feast wherein the Law was to be read; but, as Pellicanus well observes, all this Month was in a Manner holy, so that they continued employed in these holy Exercises till the End of the two and twentieth Day, which was the Conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Ver. 3. *And he read therein before the Street that was before the Water-gate, from the Morning until Mid-day,]* In the Hebrew the Words are, *from the Light*, that is, from the Break of Day, (as we speak,) or the Sun-rising, until Noon. Then, I suppose, they went to take some Repast, it being a Festival, and a Day of great Rejoicing, *a Memorial of blowing with Trumpets*, *Levit. xxiii. 24.* on which he thought good to begin the Reading of the Law, that he might do more than they desired, if they spake to him of reading it on the Feast of Tabernacles.

Before the Men and the Women, and those that could understand; and the Ears of all the People

were attentive unto the Book of the Law.] This is a general Account of what he did: The Particulars follow.

Ver. 4. *And Ezra the Scribe stood upon a Pulpit of Wood, which they had made for the Purpose,]* To raise him higher than the People, that he might be the better seen and heard by them all; whence, in the Hebrew, it is called a *Tower of Wood*: But was not like our Pulpits, which contain no more than one Person; but large and long, that many Persons might stand in it, as appears by what follows. *Vitringa* hath lately described it largely in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, p. 184, &c.

And beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiab, and Urijah, and Hilkiab, and Maaseiah, on his right Hand; and on his left Hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Mesbullam.] It is evident by these Words, that six Persons stood on his Right Hand, and seven on his Left, in the same Pulpit; being in all fourteen.

Ver. 5. *And Ezra opened the Book in the Sight of all the People, (for he was above all the People)]* He being in the very Middle of the Pulpit, and the fore-named Persons on each Side of him.

And when he opened it, all the People stood up:] Out of Reverence to the holy Word of God. See *Judges iii. 20.*

Ver. 6. *And Ezra blessed the LORD the great God, and all the People answered, Amen, Amen,]* He seems to have used the Words, wherein David ordered them to bless, *1 Chron. xvi. 36.* where all the People answered, *Amen*; as they do here with great Affection. But the Jewish Doctors pretend, that in the Temple the People never answered *Amen*, but said, *Blessed be the Name of his glorious Kingdom, for ever and ever.* So *Vitringa* notes in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, p. 1096. And our Mr. Thorndike observed the same long before, in his *Religious Assemblies*, p. 230.

With lifting up their Hands; and they bowed their Heads, and worshipped the LORD with their Faces to the Ground.] Which were all Postures in Prayer, and in thankful Acknowledgments to God.

Ver. 7. *Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiab, and the Levites, caused the People to understand the Law:]* It is thought by some, that these Persons expounded to the People what had been read to them; for the same Persons did not read, they imagine, and make them understand what was read. But *Stephanus Morinus* hath observed very well, that it is not likely that Ezra was a mere Reader, and Levites the Doctors and Expounders of the Law before Ezra and Nehemiah. It is far more likely, that Ezra began to read; and that when he was weary, some of those who stood by him on each Side went on where he left off; for it was too much for one Man to read from Morning to Mid-day. And he also instructed these Levites, if there was any Difficulty, to make the People understand what was read.

And the People stood in their Place.] Listening both to what was read, and what was delivered as the Explication of it.

Ver. 8. *So they read in the Book,*] That is, *Ezra* and his Assistants read not all the Book of the Law, but only *Deuteronomy*, as they do at this Day.

In the Law of God distinctly,] With a clear Voice and distinct Pronunciation.

And gave the Sense, and caused them to understand the Reading.] *Ezra*, and the other Persons directed by him, gave the Sense, and made them understand what was read. So the last Words are commonly expounded. But *Isaac Casaubon*, in an Epistle of his to *Suffridus Calignon*, (Epist. DCX.) disputes at large, that all the *Jews* take the Meaning to be, That the People in their Captivity having disused the *Hebrew* Tongue, and been accustomed to the *Chaldee*, *Ezra* and his Companions rendered the *Hebrew* Words exactly into the *Chaldee* Language. And to put all out of doubt, that this is their Sense, he observes, That the *Jews* at this Day retain this Custom (which they received from *Ezra*) in their Synagogues, to read the same Portion of Scripture first in *Hebrew*, and then in *Chaldee*; as he himself was Witness at *Frankfort*. And he justifies those who take these Words [*caused them to understand the Reading,*] to signify expounded the Scripture. Though the Word *Micra* be no where so used in the Bible, to signify *the Scripture*, neither doth it signify *Reading*. And another learned Man thinks the *Hebrew* Words may be more exactly translated, *Dabant intelligentiam per ipsam scripturam*, They gave the Sense by the Scripture itself. But there is not good Warrant to assert this. And the Discourse of *Casaubon* is grounded on a Tradition of the *Jews*, which hath no better Foundation than this, That they had forgot their Language in *Chaldea*, and therefore they read the Law in that Tongue which they understood better than their own. But if this were true, why did the Prophets write in *Hebrew* after their Return from Captivity? And this very Book shews the contrary, *Chap.* xiii. 23, 24. where the *Jews* Language appears to have been spoken by the People. Nor is the Custom of Reading the *Targum* after the Law very ancient, nor generally used in their Synagogues.

Ver. 9. *And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the Priest, the Scribe and the Levites, that taught the People,*] Who had instructed them in their Duty out of the Law that had been read to them.

Said unto all the People, This Day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep: For all the People wept, when they heard the Words of the Law.] They bewailed the Ignorance wherein they had lived; and the many Violations of the Law, whereof they had been guilty. Just as *Josiah* did when he heard the Words of the Law read out of a Book found unexpectedly, 2 *Chron.* xxii.

Ver. 10. *Then he said*] That is, the *Tirshatha* gave this Command, who was the principal Person among those forenamed, having the same Authority that *Zerubbabel* had. See *Chap.* vii. 65.

Go your Way,] Now that it was Noon, it was Time for them to refresh themselves.

Eat the Fat, and drink the Sweet,] Make a Feast, and provide as good Cheer as you are

able, according to the Manner upon their Festival Days.

And send Portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared:] It did not become religious People only to make much of themselves; but he would have them out of their Fulness to feast their poor Brethren, that they might rejoice with them.

For this Day is holy unto our LORD:] Being the first New-Moon in the Year, and the Feast of blowing with Trumpets, (*Levit.* xxiii. 24.) And nothing was more unsuitable to such Festivals than Mourning and Lamentation; for they were appointed to be Solemnities for Mirth and Gladness; and are therefore called *the Days of your Gladness*, in *Numb.* x. 10. And in *Psal.* xcii. 4. for the Sabbath, the Psalmist saith, *Thou LORD hast made me glad through thy Works; I will triumph in the Works of thy Hands:* Expressing the Subject of his Gladness, the Remembrance of the Creation of the World, upon that Day celebrated.

Neither be you sorry,] Inwardly grieved.

For the Joy of the LORD is your Strength.] Joy in the Lord for the great Things he had done for them, in restoring them to their own Land, building the Temple, and the Walls of *Jerusalem*, was never more becoming than upon a Festival Day, which afforded other Matter of Joy. And beside, it would make them cheerfully perform the rest of their Duty, and fortify them against Troubles and Adversities; nay, it was the Way to remove them, or to keep them off; for when the Service of God was their Delight, he promised to keep off those Plagues which were threatned in the Law against Transgressors, and to give them all the Blessings they could desire.

Ver. 11. *So the Levites stilled all the People, saying, Hold your Peace, for the Day is holy, neither be ye grieved.*] What *Nehemiah* had said to as many as could hear him, the *Levites* said to the rest of the People; going about, and persuading them to lay aside their Heaviness, and make it a good Day.

Ver. 12. *And all the People went their Way to eat and to drink, and to send Portions, and to make great Mirth,*] As all Nations were wont to do upon their Festival Days: There being very few among the *Greeks*, wherein they made Lamentations; but they rather exceeded all Bounds of Decency in their Jollity upon sacred Solemnities, being wont, besides Musick and Dancing, (which were very proper,) to entertain one another with Jest and Scoffs, and unbecoming Laughter; as the illustrious *Spanhemius* shews, in his Observations upon *Callymachus* his Hymn, in *Lavacrum Palladis, ad Versum* 324.

Because they had understood the Words that were declared unto them.] This was an extraordinary Reason for their Mirth, that they were illuminated in divine Knowledge, and understood the Will of God better than they did before.

Ver. 13. *And on the second Day were gathered together the Chief of the Fathers of all the People, the Priests and the Levites, unto Ezra the Scribe, even to understand the Words of the Law.*] This was no Festival Day, but so desirous were they

to be acquainted with the Law, (of the Knowledge of which he had given them a Taste,) that they came again this Day to beg further Instruction. Which, it is evident from hence, *Ezra* gave them, not the Priests and the *Levites*, who came to be instructed by him as well as the People.

Ver. 14. *And they found written in the Law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the Children of Israel should dwell in Booths, in the Feast of the seventh Month:*] It is probable that he read to them particularly the Duties belonging to this Month, wherein they were assembled, in which they found the Feast of Tabernacles was to be observed; and therefore they came to him for Direction how it was to be kept, that they might obey the Precept. And first he informed them that they must dwell in Booths: Which *Maimonides* shews how it is to be understood in his *Seder Zeraim*, where he explains the Tradition of the Ancients, who believed that when God gave a Precept he also gave the Exposition of it, which he pretends was preserved by their wise Men; which is a vain Fancy of the *Jews*, to support the Credit of their Traditions. But the Book *Cofri* thinks these Words [*they found it written*] are to be understood of the common People; for the better Sort understood well enough that such Festivals were to be observed, and had not forgotten any of the Precepts, *Pars III. Sect. 63.*

Ver. 15. *And that they should publish and proclaim in all their Cities, and in Jerusalem, saying,*] Then he tells them that Proclamation should be made in all their Cities, beginning in Jerusalem, that this Feast ought to be observed on such a Day, *Levit. xxiii. 4, 34.*

Go forth unto the Mount, and fetch Olive Branches, and Pine Branches, and Myrtle Branches, and Palm Branches, and Branches of thick Trees, to make Booths, as it is written.] The nearest Mount to Jerusalem was the Mount of Olives, where it is likely all these Trees grew. But the Word *Shaman* which we translate Olive Branches, our famous Dr. *Castell* thinks signifies Citrons; which is not material, they being such Branches as the Mount afforded.

Ver. 16. *So the People went forth, and brought them, and made themselves Booths, every one upon the Roof of his House,*] Which by the Law was to be built flat, *Deut. xxii. 8.*

And in their Courts, and in the Courts of the House of God, and in the Street of the Water-gate, and in the Street of the Gate of Ephraim.] They durst not make them without the Walls of the City, for fear of their Enemies.

Ver. 17. *And all the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity made Booths, and sat under the Booths:*] They not only made them, but left their Houses, and dwelt in them all the Days of the Feast.

For since the Days of Joshua the Son of Nun, unto that Day, had not the Children of Israel done so; and there was very great Gladness.] This is scarce credible, as Mr. *Mede* speaks, that for a thousand Years none of the good Kings in Israel should observe this Festival, at least in this main Circumstance of dwelling in Booths. But so he thinks it was, and that this horrible Omision of this Feast alone fore-signify'd the *Jews*

would not acknowledge *Christ*, whom this signified to be *Emmanuel*, God dwelling in our Flesh: See *Book I. Discourse xlv. p. 354.* But I think this is not the Meaning, that this Festival had never been observed since *Joshua's* Time; for we read in the foregoing Book, that it was kept at their first Return from *Babylon*. But the Meaning is, that the Joy had never been so great as it was now since that Time. For which there was a special Reason, as the *Jews* observe in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 30. for they rejoiced in the Days of *Joshua*, that they had got Possession of the Land of *Canaan*; and now they rejoiced that they were restored to it, and quietly settled in it, after they had been cast out of it.

Ver. 18. *Also Day by Day, from the first Day unto the last Day, he read in the Book of the Law of God; and they kept the Feast seven Days, and on the eighth Day was a solemn Assembly, according unto the Manner.*] There was a Command that the Law should be read on this Feast, as I observed above, *Deut. xxxi. 10, 11, 12.* but not that it should be read every Day. This was the Effect of their great Zeal to be instructed in the Law of God, which made them desire to hear it on the second Day of this Month, which was a Festival, *Ver. 13.* And perhaps the eighth Day, on which a solemn Assembly was appointed (*Levit. xxiii. 26.*) they continued the same holy Exercise. But that seems contrary to this Verse, which speaks only of seven Days.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. **N**OW in the twenty and fourth Day of this Month, the Children of Israel were assembled with Fasting, and with Sackcloths, and Earth upon them.] The Feast being over, which ended upon the twenty second Day (all which Time Mourning was forbidden, as contrary to the Nature of the Feast, which was to be kept with Joy,) they now return to that which they were about before, (*Chap. viii. 9, 12.*) and spent this whole Day in humbling themselves before God for their Sins. The Reason why they did not immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles keep this Fast, was (as *Josephus Scaliger* conjectures) because the twenty third Day was another Festival, made by the Constitution of the Elders, by the same Authority wherewith afterward they appointed the Feast of *Purim*, mentioned in the Book of *Esther*. It was called the Festival of the Law, still observed by the *Jews* on the twenty third Day of this Month, because then they make an end of Reading the Law, which they begin again every Year the next Sabbath after. Now this being a Day of Joy, as other Festivals were, on which they were forbidden to mourn, they deferred their Mourning till this Solemnity also was past, and then they fell to weeping again, as they did when they first heard the Law read.

Ver. 2. *And the Seed of Israel separated themselves from all Strangers, and stood, and confessed their Sins, and the Iniquities of their Fathers.*] Who had been guilty of taking strange Women to be their Wives; for which *Ezra* had severely censured them, and constrained them to

put them away. But so depraved were some among them, that it seems they transgressed again in this Matter, as they did in other Things, who confessed their own Guilt, and the Guilt of those that were before them, and as a Token of their true Repentance *separated* themselves from these Strangers. Which they did in such a Manner, that they *stood* at a Distance from them, to shew that they renounced them. For so the Word *stood* is to be taken in this Place, not for a Posture of Prayer, wherein they confessed their Sins; for appearing in Sackcloth, and with Earth on their Heads, it is more likely they lay down and bewailed themselves, as the Manner was in such Cases. And accordingly the *Levites* called upon them (*Ver. 5.*) to *stand up*; which supposes that they lay on the Ground, or fell on their Knees, and were not standing when they spake unto them.

Ver. 3. And they stood up in their Place, and read in the Book of the Law of the LORD their God,] That is, the *Levites* stood up in a Place built for them, like that whereon *Ezra* stood, *Chap. viii. 4.* For otherwise they could not have been heard when they read.

One fourth Part of the Day; and another fourth Part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.] They read the Law and confessed (that is, praised God, *Ver. 5.*) interchangeably. For in one fourth Part of the Day, that is, from the first Hour to the third, they did the one, and from thence to the sixth Hour, (that is, till twelve a-Clock,) they did the other. Then they began the former again till the ninth Hour, and from thence till the Evening they spent their Time in the other.

Ver. 4. Then stood up upon the Stairs of the Levites,] Or upon the Scaffold (as the Margin translates it,) which raised them above the People, that they might all see and hear.

Jeshua and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniab, Bunni, Sherebiab, Bani, and Chenani, and cried with a loud Voice unto the LORD their God.] They most earnestly beseeched him to be merciful to them.

Ver. 5. Then the Levites, Jeshua and Kadmiel, Bani, Hasabniab, Sherebiab, Hodijah, Shebaniab, and Pethabiab said, Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever:] After the *Levites* before named had cried to God for Mercy (the People, I suppose, begging it on their Knees,) another Company of *Levites* bad the People stand up, and praise the LORD, and give him Thanks as long as they had any Being.

And blessed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all Blessing and Praise.] The *Levites*, it is likely, praised him in these Words, acknowledging that the noblest Creatures could not reach his super-excellent Perfections; and all the People repeated the same Words after them.

Ver. 6. Thou, even thou art LORD alone; thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host, the Earth and all Things that are therein, the Seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all,] As they confess the LORD to be the only God, so they attribute two Things to him; That he is the Creator and the Conservator of the Universe; for having

made it, no doubt he takes care of every Part thereof.

And the Host of Heaven worshippeth thee.] Sometimes the Stars, and sometimes the Angels, are called *the Host of Heaven*. The latter seems to be here meant; for the other are mentioned before, when he saith *the Heavens with all their Host*. Concerning *the Heaven of Heavens*, see in *Solomon's Prayer*, *1 Kings viii. 27.*

Ver. 7. Thou art the LORD the God, who didst chuse Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the Name of Abraham:] Here follows a compendious History of the Affairs of the Hebrew Nation in this Confession of God's Benefits, and their Ingratitude. Which *Nehemiah* and *Ezra*, it is likely, composed in the Form of a Prayer, and delivered it to the *Levites*, whom they ordered to speak it distinctly before the whole Congregation from their several Scaffolds, which were conveniently placed in several Parts of the Assembly, that they might be heard.

Ver. 8. And foundest his Heart faithful before thee,] In many Instances, especially in that great Trial of his Faith and Obedience, when he required him to offer up his only Son to him, *Gen. xxii.* and see also *Gen. xv. 6. xvii. 5, &c.*

And madest a Covenant with him, to give the Land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his Seed, and hast performed thy Words, for thou art righteous:] True to his Word in faithfully fulfilling his Promises. See *Gen. xv. 7, 18. xvii. 2, 4, 7, &c.*

Ver. 9. And didst see the Affliction of our Fathers in Egypt, and heardest their Cry by the Red Sea:] They pass by all God's Providences over *Isaac* and *Jacob*, to come to that which God had done for them since they were a Nation; that is, since he had made good his Covenant with *Abraham*, to multiply his Seed as the Stars of Heaven; at which Time he foretold him of the grievous Affliction of his Seed in *Egypt*, *Gen. xv. 5, 13.* from which he graciously delivered them, they here acknowledge, and compleated their Deliverance at the Red Sea.

Ver. 10. And shewed Signs and Wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his Servants, and on all the People of his Land:] Which are recorded in the Book of *Exodus*, *Chap. vii, viii, &c.*

For thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them:] Intending to make them their Slaves for ever, as, for the present, they treated them with the utmost Contempt and Cruelty, *Exod. v. 17, 18.*

So didst thou get thee a Name, as it is this Day:] See *Exod. ix. 16.*

Ver. 11. And thou didst divide the Sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the Sea, on the dry Land,] *Exod. xiv. 21, 22.*

And their Persecutors thou threwest into the Deeps, as a Stone into the mighty Waters.] So that they sunk down, and rose up no more to persecute them. The Hebrew Word signifies, the strong or rough Waters. And so *Bochartus* observes out of many Greek Authors, that that Sea is called, and said, in short, to be *κατὰ πάντα ποσειδών*,

φοβερόν, in all regards formidable or terrible. In his *Canaan*, Lib. I. Cap. 13.

Ver. 12. *Moreover thou ledest them in the Day by a cloudy Pillar, and in the Night by a Pillar of Fire, to give them Light in the Way wherein they should go.*] Concerning which see *Exod.* xiii. 21.

Ver. 13. *Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from Heaven, and gavest them right Judgments, and true Laws, good Statutes and Commandments:]* This seems to relate, in the Beginning of the Verse, to the ten Commandments, spoken by the Mouth of God himself; but the latter Part comprehends all the Law delivered by him to *Moses* in the Mount, Chap. xxi, xxii, xxiii.

Ver. 14. *And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath,]* The Scripture mentions the Sabbath as a singular Gift bestowed upon the Jewish Nation, *Exod.* xvi. 29. It being a Sign between him and them, that he was their God who sanctified, that is, separated them out of all other People to be his peculiar People; that is, the Worshipers of the Creator of the World, whom they acknowledged to be the LORD their God, while the Heathen worshipped the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and other Creatures as their Gods, *Exod.* xxxi. 13. and *Ezekiel* xx. 12, 20. In which the Prophet tells us, that God intended by this to shew that he had chosen *Israel*, as I said, to be his peculiar People above all other Nations, and that they had no other God.

And commandedst them Precepts, Statutes, and Laws, by the Hand of Moses thy Servant:] Which are those before mentioned, which were not spoken by God himself, but delivered by him to *Moses* in the Mount, who was his faithful Servant, and delivered nothing but what he received from God's own Mouth. The Observation of which is often pressed upon them as an Acknowledgment of him to be their Creator, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*.

Ver. 15. *And gavest them Bread from Heaven for their Hunger, and broughtest forth Water for them out of the Rock for their Thirst,]* See *Exod.* xvi. 14, 15. xvii. 6.

And promisedst them that they should go in to possess the Land which thou hadst sworn to give them.] Which he set before them, and bad them go and possess it, as *Moses* tells them, *Deut.* i. 8.

Ver. 16. *But they and our Fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their Necks, and hearkened not to thy Commandments,]* A famous Instance of this there was when they refused to go up and possess the Land, to the Borders of which he had brought them, *Numb.* xiv. 1, 2, &c. And afterwards more insolently rebelled against *Moses* and *Aaron*, who had been their Conductors through the Wilderness, *Numb.* xvi. 3.

Ver. 17. *And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy Wonders that thou didst among them, but hardened their Necks,]* Their Ingratitude was the greater, because these Wonders were not done among other Nations, but were peculiar to them; which our Saviour makes a very high Aggravation of the Sins of their Posterity, *Matth.* xi. 21.

And in their Rebellion appointed a Captain to return to their Bondage:] See *Numb.* xiv. 4. where they consulted about it, and it seems came to this Resolution, that they agreed upon a Captain to lead them back to *Egypt*. Or their resolving to do it, was the same with the actual Appointment of a Captain, as it was in the Case of *Abraham's* offering his Son.

But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, and forsookest them not.] This was the Character God gave of himself to *Moses*, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. which he made good to all Generations. See *Psalms* cxlv. 8.

Ver. 18. *Yea, when they had made them a molten Calf, and said, This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great Provocations:]* This was the highest Provocation, considering how lately he had spoken to them from Heaven not to make a graven Image, and how many Cautions he had afterwards given them against it.

Ver. 19. *Yet thou in thy manifold Mercies forsookest them not in the Wilderness:]* But gave them an early Instance of his Clemency.

The Pillar of the Cloud departed not from them by Day, to lead them in the Way, neither the Pillar of Fire by Night, to shew them Light, and the Way wherein they should go.] Which testified, that notwithstanding their Provocation, God was still among them, and continued his gracious Presence with them; of which this was a glorious Token, as *Moses* told them, *Numb.* xiv. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them,]* The Spirit of Prophecy, which was upon *Moses*, God imparted to seventy other Persons, that the People might be better governed, *Numb.* xi. 16, 17.

And withheldest not thy Manna from their Mouth,] But continued it till they came to *Canaan*; or else they might have been starved: See *Josh.* v. 12.

And gavest them Water for their Thirst.] When the whole Congregation deserved to perish, according to their own Wish, that they had died when their Brethren died before the LORD, *Numb.* xx. 3.

Ver. 21. *Yea, forty Years didst thou sustain them in the Wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their Clothes waxed not old, and their Feet swelled not.]* See *Deut.* viii. 4.

Ver. 22. *Moreover thou gavest them Kingdoms and Nations, and didst divide them into Corners:]* Some translate the last Words, *Thou didst divide them by Angels*; that is, he parted those Kingdoms among them as by a Line. But others understand it of the People dispossessed by the *Jews*, whom he drove into Corners.

So they possessed the Land of Sihon, and the Land of the King of Heshbon, and the Land of Og King of Bashan.] Most of the Inhabitants of which he destroyed, and the rest fled and hid themselves in Corners. But it must be observed, that *Heshbon* being the City of *Sihon* (*Numb.* xxi. 26.) the first Words should be rendered, *the Land of Sihon, even the Land of the King of Heshbon*.

Ver. 23. *Their Children also multipliedst thou as the Stars of Heaven, and broughtest them into the Land, concerning which thou hast promised to their*

their Fathers, that they should go in to possess it.] See Gen. xv. 5.

Ver. 24. *So the Children went in and possessed the Land; and thou subduedst before them the Inhabitants of the Land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their Hands, with their Kings, and the People of the Land, that they might do with them as they would.]* These Words express the easy Conquest they made of the whole Country.

Ver. 25. *And they took strong Cities,]* The Walls of Jericho falling down flat before them.

And a fat Land,] A fruitful Country flowing with Milk and Honey.

And possessed Houses full of all Goods, Wells digged, Vineyards, and Oliveyards, and Fruit-Trees in Abundance:] They were enriched with the Estates of the People whom they destroyed, having Houses ready built, and well furnished, together with all Sorts of Trees planted to their Hands.

So they did eat, and were filled, and became fat,] They wanted nothing, but rather had Superfluity of all worldly Blessings.

And delighted themselves in thy great Goodness.] Their highest Pleasure indeed ought to have been in their Thoughts how good God was unto them; but the Meaning of these Words is no more than this, That God had bestowed so many Blessings upon them, that they took great Pleasure in the Enjoyment of them.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheless, they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy Law behind their Backs,]* The pleasant Life they led in the good Land God gave them, made them wanton, and forgetful of God and of his Laws, which they regarded not at all.

And slew the Prophets which testified against them, to turn them to thee,] We read of many Prophets slain by Jezebel, 1 Kings xviii. 4. xix. 10.

And they wrought great Provocations.] By abominable Idolatries.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou deliveredst them into the Hand of their Enemies, who vexed them; and in the Time of their Trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from Heaven; and according to thy manifold Mercies, thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the Hand of their Enemies.]* The whole Book of Judges verifies this, that God delivered them for their Sins unto the Moabites, the Canaanites, and divers other Enemies, who grievously domineered over them; but when they cried to God for Help, he was so gracious as to send such great Men as Barak, Gideon, and others to be their Saviours, that is, Deliverers from their Tyranny.

Ver. 28. *But after they had Rest, they did evil again before thee:]* No sooner did they begin to prosper, and the Judge that saved them was dead, but they revolted from God, who had been so good to them.

Therefore ledest thou them in the Hand of their Enemies, so that they had the Dominion over them:] God so abandoned them, that he let the Philistines rule over them forty Years, Judges xiii. 1. unto which perhaps this Passage relates.

Yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from Heaven, and many times

didst thou deliver them, according to thy Mercies:] For nothing else could move him to it; they being through all Generations unconstant, and unsteadfast in their Obedience.

Ver. 29. *And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy Law:]* By many remarkable Punishments he testified how highly he was displeased with them, that he might reform them.

Yet they dealt proudly,] Which one would have expected should have humbled them; but they grew more bold and obstinate in their Sins.

And hearkened not unto thy Commandments, but sinned against thy Judgments, (which if a Man do, he shall live in them,)] That is, be a happy Man.

And withdrew the Shoulder, and hardened their Neck, and would not bear.] Withdrawing the Shoulder is a Metaphor (I have observed before) taken from refractory Oxen that draw back, and will not submit to the Yoke.

Ver. 30. *Yet many Years didst thou forbear them,]* Before he suffered them to be carried Captive out of their own Land.

And testifiedst against them by thy Spirit in thy Prophets:] Whom he raised up (I have observed elsewhere) in every Age, in every King's Reign, to tell them their Duty, and reprove them for their Sins.

Yet would they not give ear; therefore gavest thou them into the Hands of the People of the Lands.] At last he delivered them into the Hands of the Chaldeans, as we read, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. who are called the People of the Lands, because they had got Possession of all the Countries thereabout, which God put under their Power, as he had done other Countries beyond Euphrates.

Ver. 31. *Nevertheless, for thy great Mercies sake, thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them,]* But left them a Remnant of the poorer Sort in the Land, and shewed Favour to the Captives in the Land of Babylon.

For thou art a gracious and merciful God.] To which alone they owed their Preservation from utter Destruction.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest Covenant and Mercy:]* Thus he began his Address to God before he came from Shushan. See Chap. i. Ver. 5.

Let not all the Trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Priests, and on our Prophets, and on our Fathers, and on all thy People, since the Time of the Kings of Assyria, unto this Day.] For those Kings first began to invade their Country, and carried away the ten Tribes, 2 Kings xv. 19. xvii. 3, 5, &c. After which, Calamities came upon Judah, their good King Josiah being slain, Manasseh carried to Babylon before the great Captivity.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly.*

Ver. 34. *Neither have our Kings, our Princes, our Priests, nor our Fathers, kept thy Law, nor hearkened unto thy Commandments, and the Testimonies wherewith thou didst testify against them.*

Ver.

Ver. 35. *For they have not served thee in their Kingdom, and in thy great Goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat Land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked Works.]* In these three Verses they acknowledge the Justice of God, in all the Punishments he had inflicted on them, though heavy, and of long Continuance. For from the highest to the lowest they had done all wickedly, and would not be reclaimed.

Ver. 36. *Behold we are Servants this Day, and for the Land that thou gavest unto our Fathers, to eat the Fruit thereof, and the Good thereof, behold, we are Servants in it.]* God had indeed marvellously restored them to their own Country; yet the Marks of his Displeasure for their Sins still remained very visible: For they were but Servants unto others, not Owners and Proprietors of the Land which God had given to their Fathers; out of which they had been cast for their Wickedness, and had not yet perfectly recovered it, but laboured for their Lords and Masters.

Ver. 37. *And it yielded much Increase unto the Kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our Sins:]* For their Land paid a great Tribute to the Kings of *Persia*, out of the Profit of it, *Ezra* vi. 8. vii. 24. and in this Book, Chap. v. 4.

Also they have Dominion over our Bodies, and over our Cattle, at their Pleasure,] For their Bodies were liable to be pressed to serve in the King's Wars, or in his Works; and their Cattle subject to them, when they had Occasion to send Post about the King's Business.

And we are in great Distress.] Though they were permitted to live by their own Laws, (as we read in the Book of *Ezra*;) which was a great Privilege, yet they lay under those publick Burdens, and were compelled to bear them. By which we may learn how vain their proud Boasts were in *John* viii. 33. that they *were never in Bondage to any Man*; when they had long been Slaves in *Egypt*, and lately in *Babylon*, and after they came from thence, as they here complain; and even then they paid Tribute to the *Romans*, when they made those Brags to our Saviour.

Ver. 38. *And because of all this, we make a sure Covenant and write it; and our Princes, Levites, and Priests seal unto it.]* In Consideration of which they resolved to renew their Covenant with God of better Obedience; which they promised under their Hands and Seals, as the only Remedy to procure perfect Deliverance. And to make it more effectual, they seem to declare this in the Presence of God, at the Conclusion of the foregoing Confession and Prayer.

It signified little indeed, as *Pellicanus* observes, what such an untoward People promised; for what Regard would they have to their own Hand-Writing, who regarded not the Ten Commandments, written on Tables of Stone by the Finger of God? But it was very useful that there should be a publick Instrument to convince them of their Impiety, and that they might be publickly confounded when they proved perfidious Deserters, by shewing them their Engagements under their own Hands to future Fidelity.

C H A P. X.

Ver. 1. *N*OW those that sealed, were *Nehemiah the Tirshatha, the Son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,]* *Nehemiah* was the Governor of the Country under the King of *Persia*, and therefore the principal Prince among them, who led the Way to the rest; who are not mentioned, unless we suppose *Zidkijah* to have been a Prince; for they that followed were Priests.

Ver. 2. *Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,]* I need not transcribe the rest of the Names to the eighth Verse, at the End of which it is said *these were the Priests*, that is, the Chief of them, for there are but twenty and one of them in all; and there is no Mention of *Ezra* the Priest among them; of which it is hard to give an Account, unless we suppose him to be now gone to *Babylon*: Which must be very lately; for he was at *Jerusalem* in the Beginning of the seventh Month, Chap. viii. 2. Though on the twenty fourth Day of it, when they fasted and prayed, we do not find him named throughout the whole ninth Chapter; yet at the Feast of the Dedication he was come to *Jerusalem* again, Chap. xii. 36. Some therefore think, he was now hindered by Sicknes from being present at this Sealing.

Ver. 9. *And the Levites, both Jeshua the Son of Azaniah, Binnui of the Sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;*

Ver. 10. *And their Brethren, &c.]* There are fourteen, *Levites* mentioned in these and the following Verses, to Ver. 14. which perhaps were all the *Levites* that were then present; or, rather were the principal *Levites*, who were not Priests: For some of these are mentioned before, as chosen to expound the Law to the People, and to make publick Prayers to God, Chap. viii. 7. ix. 4, 5.

Ver. 14. *The Chief of the People; Parosh, &c.]* It had been tedious to make all the People subscribe and seal the Writing; therefore the principal Persons did it in the Name of the rest, whose Names, in Number forty and three, are here recorded till Ver. 28.

Ver. 28. *And the rest of the People, the Priests, the Levites, the Porters, the Singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the People of the Lands unto the Law of God, their Wives, their Sons, and their Daughters, every one having Knowledge, and having Understanding:]* All that did not subscribe and seal, because they were too many, yet gave their Consent to what the forenamed Persons did. And not only the Men, but their Wives, and their Children, who were arrived at Years of Discretion, engaged themselves, as follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 29. *They clave to their Brethren, their Nobles,]* They declared, they were of the same Mind with those that had sealed; and owned by Word of Mouth what they had set their Hands unto; and said, it was their Act and Deed, as much as their Nobles and Brethren, from whom they would not depart.

And entred into a Curse, and into an Oath, to walk in God's Law, which was given by Moses, the

the Servant of God, and to observe and do all the Commandments of the LORD our God, and his Judgments, and his Statutes:] And more than that, they added an Oath, whereby they obliged themselves to observe the Law; and an Imprecation upon themselves, wishing all the Curses written in the Law might fall upon them, if they did not do as the Law required in all Things.

Ver. 30. *And that we would not give our Daughters unto the People of the Land, nor take their Daughters for our Sons:]* Besides their general Promise, they specify those Things that were most difficult; as not marrying with Strangers, observing the Sabbath, bringing Oblations for the Use of the Temple, &c. The first Thing here specified was of great Importance; and they solemnly engaged to perform it; for though both *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* had found them guilty of breaking this Law, yet they were so prone to offend in this Thing, that it seems, notwithstanding all they could do, some continued to violate it.

Ver. 31. *And if the People of the Land]* That is, their Heathen Neighbours.

Bring Ware, or any Victuals on the Sabbath-Day, to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath,] We do not find any express Law forbidding them to buy what was offered to be sold on the Sabbath-Day; but they obliged themselves not to do it, that the Rest might be better observed. For none would come to sell, when there were no Chapmen for their Commodities.

Or on the Holy-Day:] That is, on all Days of Rest from their Labours; such as the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, and others.

And that we would leave the seventh Year,] That is, let their Land rest every seventh Year, and leave the Fruit of it, which grew up of itself, for the Poor, as the Law required, *Levit. xxv. 4, &c.*

And the Exaction of every Debt.] That is, remit in that Year the Debts which the Poor owed them, *Deut. xv. 2, 4, &c.*

Ver. 32. *Also we made Ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third Part of a Shekel, for the Service of the House of our God,]* We do not find this enjoined any where by an express Law; but Reason required it at this Time; and therefore they obliged themselves to it by an Ordinance of the Elders, that the Service of God at the Temple might be maintained by this small Duty, which was laid upon every one.

Ver. 33. *For the Shew-Bread, and for the continual Meat-Offering, and for the continual Burnt-Offering, of the Sabbaths, of the New-Moons; for the set Feasts, and for the holy Things; and for the Sin-Offerings, to make an Atonement for Israel; and for all the Work of the House of our God.]* There was a Treasury formerly in the House of God, out of which all these Things were supplied: And when it was exhausted by the many great Sums which were sent out of it to foreign Princes in the Days of *Hezekiah*, that Prince maintained the Burnt-Offerings at his own Charge, 2 *Chron. xxxi. 3*. But both these failing for the present, there was this Oblation made to furnish all the Things

here mentioned, and every Thing else that was necessary for the Service of God. And no doubt, many good People dedicated Things to the same Use; whereby the Expences were well maintained.

Ver. 34. *And we cast the Lots among the Priests, the Levites, and the People, for the Wood-Offering, to bring it into the House of our God, after the Houses of our Fathers, at Times appointed, Year by Year, to burn upon the Altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law:]* They determined by casting of Lots, how much Wood every one should bring in for their Share, to maintain their Fire continually upon the Altar to burn the Sacrifices; and in what Order it should be brought, (what Family, that is, should begin first, and what should follow next,) and at what Times of the Year. For there was another solemn Feast, (beside those I mentioned before,) called *the Feast of the Wood-Offering*, which took its Original from hence; and, as *Scaliger* observes, was kept on the twenty second Day of the Month *Ab*. But *Mr. Thorndike* observes, out of the *Mischnah*, (in his *Religious Assemblies*, p. 269.) that it was held nine Days in several Months, whereof a great Part fell in that Month; and is meant by these Words, *at Times appointed, Year by Year*. The *Talmudists* also say, that every Family, on the Day when they brought in the Wood, sacrificed a voluntary Burnt-Offering, called the *Korban of Wood*, as *Petrus Cunæus* observes in his *Book De Republica Hebræorum*, Lib. II. Cap. 13. Where he notes also, that herein *Josephus* differs from the *Talmudists*; that he mentions but one Day of the Feasts, which he calls *ξύλοφορεία*: which was such a solemn Festival, (as *Maimonides* saith, in his *Furniture of the Temple*, Cap. 6.) that none might mourn on this Day, nor fast, nor do any Work.

Ver. 35. *And to bring the First-Fruits of our Ground, and the First-Fruits of all Fruit of all Trees, Year by Year, unto the House of the LORD:]* According to the Command, *Exod. xxiii. 19. Levit. xix. 23*. See below, *Ver. 39*.

Ver. 36. *Also the First-born of our Sons and of our Cattle, (as it is written in the Law,) and the Firstlings of our Herds, and of our Flocks, to bring to the House of our God, unto the Priests that minister in the House of our God:]* The Law which gave all the Firstlings to God, is in *Exod. xiii. the Beginning*, and *Ver. 11, 12*. and God gave them all to *Aaron* the Priest, in *Numb. xviii. 15, 16*.

Ver. 37. *And that we should bring the First-Fruits of our Dough, and our Offerings,]* See *Levit. xxiii. 17*. and *Numb. xv. 19, 20*. It was to be so large, that it is called a Gift, in *Deut. xviii. 4*.

And the Fruit of all manner of Trees, of Wine, and of Oil, unto the Priests, to the Chambers of the House of our God,] See *Numb. xviii. 12, &c.*

And the Tithes of our Ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the Tithes in all the Cities of our Tillage.] See *Levit. xxvii. 30. Numb. xviii. 21*.

Ver. 38. *And the Priest the Son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take Tithes; and the Levites shall bring up the Tithe of the Tithes unto the House of our God, to the Chambers,*

bers, into the Treasure-House.] As the People gave the Tithe of their Land to the *Levites*, so the *Levites* gave a Tithe to the Priests. And when the People brought them to the *Levites*; one of the Priests was appointed to be present to inspect them, and to see that without Fraud they tithed the Tithes, that is, set out the tenth Part of the Tithes they had received for the Priest, which were brought to the Chambers, wherein they were deposited for the Priests in God's House.

Ver. 39. *For the Children of Israel, and the Children of Levi, shall bring the Offering of the Corn, of the new Wine, and the Oil,]* See Deut. xii. 6, 11.

Unto the Chambers, where are the Vessels of the Sanctuary, and the Priests that minister, and the Porters, and the Singers:] Where other holy Things were kept, and where God's Ministers attended, for whose Use they were designed, and were to be brought thither at their own Charge. These Chambers were in the Court of the Priests: But *L'Empereur* thinks the Court of the People likewise might have such Places in it, wherein these Things were bestowed, being more than the other could contain. For (as the *Jews* observe) though the Priests had a Court proper to themselves, into which none might come but they alone, yet they were not excluded from the Court of *Israel*; and if there was not Room enough to receive all the Things fore-mentioned, there were Receptacles under Ground, besides the Upper-Room mentioned *Jerem. xxxv. 4.*

And we will not forsake the House of our God.] They promise, according to their Covenant and Oath, to be no more so negligent in these Matters, as they had been; and accordingly they did fulfil this Promise, as we read Chap. xii. 44, 45. unto the End.

C H A P. XI.

Ver. 1. **A**ND the Rulers of the People dwelt at *Jerusalem:*] Their Neighbours were so enraged to see the Walls at *Jerusalem* built again, and were so restless in their Designs to keep this City from rising to its former Splendor, that it terrified many of the *Jews* from coming to dwell there, thinking themselves more safe in the Country, where their Enemies had no Pretence to disturb them. The Rulers therefore of the People came and settled themselves at *Jerusalem*, that they might invite and encourage others to come and inhabit it; and several Persons, as the next Verse intimates, did come and offer themselves freely to dwell with them there.

The rest of the People also cast Lots to bring one of Ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy City, and nine Parts to dwell in other Cities.] But though the Rulers were settled here, and some followed their Example, and all that formerly belonged to *Jerusalem* were ordered to return, (Chap. vii. 4, 5.) yet still there was Room for more Citizens; and the City, considering how large it was, being very empty, they consulted to make it populous, by compelling every tenth Man in *Judah* and *Benjamin* to quit their present Habitations in the Country, and come and dwell there; leaving the rest to dwell where they

pleased. For which End they cast Lots, that among ten Men it might be known whom God chose to come thither; and the Lot falling by a divine Appointment upon such a Person, rather than another, no doubt, he removed the more contentedly to this City.

Ver. 2. *And the People blessed all the Men that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.]* Beside those who were chosen by Lot, it seems there were some that voluntarily chose to go and live there; whom the People highly commended and praised, beseeching God to bless and prosper them: For indeed they were worthy to be honoured as Men that sought the Welfare of their Country, the Glory of God, the Restoring of their Nation, the Defence of their City, and had a Zeal for the Divine Service performed there.

Ver. 3. *Now these are the Chief of the Province,]* Of those *Jews* that came from *Babylon* into the Province of *Judea*.

That dwelt in Jerusalem:] Whose Names are mentioned Ver. 4, &c.

But in the Cities of Judah dwelt every one in his Possession in their Cities, to wit, Israel, the Priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the Children of Solomon's Servants.] But those that dwelt in the other Cities of *Judah*, he would not reckon in this Catalogue; whom he comprehends under the Name of *Israel*, the Priests, the Levites, the Nethinims, and *Solomon's Servants*. By *Israel* he means all the People of the ten Tribes, as well as *Judah* and *Benjamin*, who were the Chief; but he calls them *Israel*, because those of *Judah* and *Benjamin* dwelt at *Jerusalem*; the rest of *Israel* were in the other Cities of *Judah*.

Ver. 4. *And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the Children of Judah, and of the Children of Benjamin:]* For these were the Tribes that anciently possessed *Jerusalem*; which stood partly in the one, partly in the other Tribe. Therefore in some Places of Scripture, *Jerusalem* is reckoned as belonging to the Children of *Judah*, (see *Josh. xv. 63. Judges i. 8.*) and sometimes in the same Words to the Children of *Benjamin*, (*Judges xviii. 20. xxi. 28.*) and here to both. But what Part of the City belonged to the one, and what to the other, is not agreed among learned Men. *Pineda* hath represented the several Opinions about it at large, in his Book *De Rebus Solomonis, Lib. V. Cap. 5.*

Of the Children of Judah; Athaiab the Son of Uzziab, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Amariah, the Son of Shephatiah, the Son of Mahala-leel, of the Children of Perez:] These were all of that Family of *Pharaz*, the Son of *Judah*. If the Names of these Persons mentioned in this Chapter, be compared with the Names of those who came back with *Zerubbabel*, it will appear, that they were the fourth, fifth, and sixth Generation from *Zerubbabel*; which is a Demonstration, that *Nehemiah* did not come to *Jerusalem* in the Time of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, but of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*. For this Observation I am beholden to my worthy Friend Dr. *Alix*.

Ver. 5. *And Maaseiah the Son of Baruch, the Son of Colhozeb, the Son of Hazaiab, the Son of Adaiah, the Son of Joiarib, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Shiloni.]* These were all of the same Family, as the next Verse informs us.

Ver. 6. *All the Sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem, were four hundred threescore and eight valiant Men.*] Who seem to me to have offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem, and help to defend it by their Valour, whose Chiefs were *Attaiah* and *Maaseiah*.

Ver. 7. *And these are the Sons of Benjamin; Sallu the Son of Mesbullam, the Son of Joed, the Son of Pedaiab, the Son of Kolaiab, the Son of Maaseiah, the Son of Ithiel, the Son of Jesaiab.*

Ver. 8. *And after him Gabbai, Sallai,*] These two, and Sallu (before named) were the chief Men among them.

Nine hundred twenty and eight.] There were almost as many more of Benjamin, as of Judah, (who were but four hundred sixty and eight;) for though Mount *Sion* was in the Tribe of Judah, yet the City of Jerusalem was in the Tribe of Benjamin; which made them have a great Desire to see it inhabited, and inflamed the Minds of the most Valiant, who were best able to defend it, to come and live there.

Ver. 9. *And Joel the Son of Zickri was their Overseer, and Judah the Son of Senuab was Second over the City.*] The former of these was the Governor of the City; and the other was his Deputy; who is called *Secondary*, because he was next to him in the Discharge of that Office. Who is he, as *Bertram* thinks, that is called in the second Book of *Maccabees*, iii. 4. *πρεσβύτερος τῆς ἱερῆς, the Prefect of the Temple;* and by *Josephus*, *Antiq. xiv. 11. ὑποστράτηγος ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, the Under-Governor in Jerusalem.* See his *Repub. Jud. p. 163.*

Ver. 10. *Of the Priests, Jedaiah the Son of Joiarib, Jachin.*] Now he comes to speak of the Tribe of Levi; many of which it was necessary should dwell there, to attend the House of God. And first he begins with the Priests, who were his chief Ministers.

Ver. 11. *Seraiah the Son of Hilkiab, the Son of Mesbullam, the Son of Zadok, the Son of Meraioth, the Son of Akitub, was the Ruler of the House of God.*] This *Seraiah* was such a chief Man among the Priests, as he that is mentioned in *2 Chron. xix. 11.* see there. Some take him to be the same with him that is called in the *New Testament* *στρατηγὸς τῆς ἱερῆς*, which we translate, *the Captain of the Temple.*

Ver. 12. *And their Brethren that did the Work of the House, were eight hundred twenty and two:*] Who discharged all the Offices of the Priests in the Temple.

And Adaiab the Son of Jeroham, the Son of Pelaliah, the Son of Amzi, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Pasbur, the Son of Malchiab.

Ver. 13. *And his Brethren, Chief of the Fathers, two hundred forty and two; and Amashai, the Son of Azareel, the Son Abasai, the Son of Mesbillemoth, the Son of Immer.*

Ver. 14. *And their Brethren, mighty Men of Valour, an hundred twenty and eight:*] Some of the Priests were noted to be Men of great Courage, who, when there was Occasion, fought for their Country, especially to defend the House of God.

And their Overseer was Zabdiel, the Son of one of the great Men.] Or, as the Margin, *the Son of Haggadolim*, was set over these valiant Men; being descended (it is supposed by some) from

some of the great Men among the Priests; as the Word *Haggadolim* imports.

Ver. 15. *Also of the Levites, Shemaiah the Son of Hasbub, the Son of Azrikam, the Son of Hasbabiab, the Son of Bunni.*] After the Priests he gives an Account of the Levites; among whom this Person, and the two other mentioned in the next Verses, were the Chief.

Ver. 16. *And Shabbethai, and Jozabad, of the Chief of the Levites, had the Oversight of the outward Business of the House of God.*] There were a great many Things to be done, without the Temple, as well as within, to prepare for the Service of it; particularly, to gather the third Part of a Shekel, which every one was to give to make Provision for it, *Chap. x. 32.* which Work was committed to these Men. Though *Bertram* (*de Republica Judaica*, p. 160, 363.) thinks, this may be the Meaning, That they were Judges and Officers in the Country, where their Presence was necessary, when there were but few to discharge such outward Business in Israel, as it is called in *1 Chron. xxvi. 29.*

Ver. 17. *And Mattaniah the Son of Micha, the Son of Zabdi, the Son of Asaph, was the Principal to begin the Thanksgiving in Prayer:*] He was the Precentor (as we call him in our Choirs) who begun to sing the Hymn at Morning and Evening Sacrifice; which seems to be that in *1 Chron. xvi. 7, 8, &c.* in the latter Part of which they pray to God, as in the former they give Thanks.

And Bakbukiah the Second among his Brethren, and Abda the Son of Shammua, the Son of Galel, the Son of Jeduthun.] The first of these seems to have supplied the Place of *Mattathiah*, when he was absent.

Ver. 18. *All the Levites in the holy City, were two hundred fourscore and four.*] Who certainly attended there; unless we suppose, with *Bertram*, that they went forth some Time about some outward Business, which they were required to dispatch.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the Porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their Brethren that kept the Gates, were an hundred seventy and two.*] Who had the Custody of the Gates of the Temple.

Ver. 20. *And the Residue of Israel, of the Priests and the Levites, were in all the Cities of Judah, every one in his Inheritance.*] He had said before, that the rest of Israel dwelt in their own Cities, (*Ver. 3.*) and now he saith, that so did the rest of the Priests and the Levites dwell in the Cities anciently appointed for them.

Ver. 21. *But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel:*] Which was a Place upon the Wall of Jerusalem, or a Tower near it. See iii. 26. *2 Chron. xxvii. 3.*

And Zia and Gispa were over the Nethinims.] Two Persons of their own Body, I suppose, who were appointed to see them do their Duty.

Ver. 22. *The Overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem, was Uzzi the Son of Bani, the Son of Hasbabiab, the Son of Mattaniah, the Son of Micha:*] He was set over the Levites, to govern them, and see them discharge their Offices in an orderly Manner. The LXX translate it *Ἐπισκοπῆς*, and so doth the *Vulgar*; for he was Supervisor of those below him.

Of the Sons of Asaph, the Singers were over the Business of the House of God.] They were ordered to

to look after the Reparation of the Temple; for which they had the more Leisure; both because they did not come in their Courses to Jerusalem, as others did, but were settled there; and were to attend at the Temple only at certain Hours, after which they might look after other Business.

Ver. 23. *For it was the King's Commandment concerning them, that a certain Portion should be for the Singers, due for every Day.*] Beside the fore-named Reasons, they had great Encouragement from the King, who ordered them a certain Portion for their Maintenance every Day. Some are of Opinion, that this was King David, who first appointed them to attend in a settled Course; but it is more likely, it was the King of Persia, who out of his Munificence made them a daily Allowance for their better Support; they that sung Hymns to their Gods being Persons much valued in all Countries: And if David made any Provision for them, it being lost, most likely was not yet restored.

Ver. 24. *And Pethabiah, the Son of Meshezabeel, of the Children of Zerab, the Son of Judab,]* We had the Children of Pharez named before, who settled at Jerusalem, (Ver. 6.) and now it appears that some of the Posterity of his Brother did the same; for here is one Man mentioned who was of great Authority under the King of Persia, as it here follows.

Was at the King's Hand in all Matters concerning the People,] The King appointed him to receive all Petitions from the People, and by him returned them Answers. This seems the plain Sense, according to our Translation. But some translate it not *at the King's Hand*, but *on the King's Part*, that is, he heard all Causes in Civil Matters between the King and the People; as about his Tribute, or any Grievance of which they complained. And Bertram thinks it appears by the very Context, that he was appointed by the King (so *at his Hand*, or *by his Hand* may be understood) to see all Things supplied which the People were bound to furnish for the Temple: Or rather, as Pellicanus thinks, to see that what the King allowed for publick Sacrifices to be made for him, and for his Family (Ezra vi. 10.) were duly paid out of the Treasury of the Province.

Ver. 25. *And for the Villages with their Fields, some of the Children of Judab dwelt at Kirjathbarba and in the Villages thereof, and at Dibon and in the Villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel and in the Villages thereof,]* He gives no Account of the Families that dwelt in the Country, as he doth of those that settled in Jerusalem, but only mentions the Towns wherein they dwelt, which formerly had been walled Cities, but now open Villages, wherein Houses were built, but not their Walls.

Ver. 26. *And at Jeshua, and at Moladab, and at Bethphelet,]* In this and in the following Verses, unto Ver. 31. he mentions the other Towns wherein the Children of Judab dwelt, who did not come to inhabit at Jerusalem.

Ver. 27. *And at Hazar-shual, and at Beer-sheba and in the Villages thereof.*

Ver. 28. *And at Ziklag, and at Mekonab and in the Villages thereof.*

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Ver. 29. *And at En-rimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth,*

Ver. 30. *Zanoah, Adullam, and in their Villages, at Lachish and the Fields thereof, at Azekah and in the Villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto the Valley of Hinnom.]* It appears by this Account that some of these great Towns or Cities without Walls, had little Villages about them, but others had only Fields, and no Villages in them, the Country being as yet but thinly peopled.

Ver. 31. *The Children also of Benjamin, from Geba, dwelt in Michmas, and Aija, and Bethel, and in their Villages,]* Geba had formerly been an eminent Place in this Tribe, and so was Bethel.

Ver. 32. *And at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiab,*

Ver. 33. *Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,*

Ver. 34. *Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,*

Ver. 35. *Lod and Ono, the Valley of Craftsmen.]* We read of Lod and Ono before in the first Book of Chronicles. See Chap. viii. Ver. 12.

Ver. 36. *And of the Levites, were Divisions in Judab, and in Benjamin.]* The rest of the Levites who were not settled at Jerusalem, were distributed among the People of Judab and Benjamin, who dwelt in the forenamed Towns, whom they taught and instructed in Religion and good Manners.

We read also, 1 Chron. ix. 3. that some of the Children of Ephraim and Manasseh dwelt at Jerusalem; but, I suppose, they were so few, that they are not here remembered; or, perhaps, they removed to some other Place when Jerusalem continued without Walls.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW these are the Priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: The Chief of the Priests, as they are called, Ver. 7. whom he thought fit to mention here, because he intended to describe the Dedication and Consecration of the City, where the Ministry of the Priests and Levites was to be employed.

Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,] If this was the same Ezra that wrote the foregoing Book, or Part of it, then he went back to Babylon after his coming up to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, and came again instructed with a large Power in the seventh Year of Artaxerxes: But there are many Reasons to prove he was not the same.

Ver. 2. *Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,]* He that is here called Malluch, is called Melicu, Ver. 14. And such Differences are in some of the following Names, which are repeated, Ver. 15, 16, &c. It being common among the Jews (as I have noted upon the Book of Chronicles) to vary in the Pronunciation of Names, and sometimes to give two Names.

Ver. 3. *Shebaniab, Rehum, Meremoth,]* The first of these is called Shebaniab, Ver. 14. and the other two, in Ver. 15. are called Harim and Meraioth.

Ver. 4. *Iddo, Ginnetho, Abijah,]* The second of these is called Ginnethon, Ver. 16. which is a small Difference. And Abijah was the Head of the Course of Priests from whom Zechariah, the Father of John Baptist sprung, as Bertram thinks, de Rep. Jud. Cap. xviii. p. 311.

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Ver.

Ver. 5. *Miamin, Maadiab, Bilgab,*] The first of these is called *Miniamin*, and the next *Moadiab*, Ver. 17. which are likewise very small Variations.

Ver. 6. *Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,*

Ver. 7. *Sallu, Amok, Hilkiab, Jedaiah:*] The first of these is called *Salai*, Ver. 20.

These were the Chief of the Priests,] Heads of the Courses of the Priests which *David* instituted, and were restored after their Return from Captivity, though as yet not so many as they had been before. See *Ezra*, vi. 18.

And of their Brethren in the Days of Jeshua.] Who was the High Priest at the Return from Captivity. The Meaning seems to be, that they were not only Heads of all those who were under them, but the Chief of the Heads who were properly their Brethren.

Ver. 8. *Moreover the Levites; Jeshua, Binui, Kadmiel, Sherebiab, Judab, and Mattaniah, which was over the Thanksgiving, he and his Brethren.*] They were appointed to see the Psalm of Thanksgiving sung every Morning and Evening at the Burnt-Sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *Also Bakkubiah, and Unni, their Brethren, were over against them in the Watches.*] That is, these minister'd in their Courses as the others did, and kept their Stations over against them in their Turns of Attendance, which are called *their Watches* or *Wards*. See Ver. 24.

Ver. 10. *And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada.*

Ver. 11. *And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.*] In these two Verses is an Account of the Succession of the High Priests, from the Return of the Captivity, till the Time that they began to bear the greatest Sway in the Jewish Nation. For this *Jaddua* is commonly thought to be that *Jaddus* the High Priest who went to meet *Alexander* the Great in his pontifical Habit, as he came from the Conquest of *Tyre* and *Gaza*, and procured great Privileges for the Jewish Nation. Now this being granted, the Scripture History ends, as *Grotius* observes, where the very Light of Times, (as he speaks,) that is, the Affairs of *Alexander* begins: From which Time all Things in History are clear, the Affairs of the *Jews* being recorded by many Greek Writers, (several of which are now perished,) as appears by *St. Hieron* upon *Daniel*.

Ver. 12. *And in the Days of Joiakim were Priests, the Chief of the Fathers; of Seraiah, Meraiab; of Jeremiah, Hananiah.*

Ver. 13. *Of Ezra, Meshullam, &c.*] As he had mentioned those who were Chief of the Priests in the Days of *Jeshua*, so now he thinks fit to mention the Sons of every one of them who officiated in the Days of *Joiakim* the Son of *Jeshua*, either as Assistants to their Fathers, or succeeding them when they were dead. He begins with those three named, Ver. 1. and so proceeds in order to give an Account of the rest which reaches to Ver. 22. and need not be transcribed.

Ver. 22. *The Levites in the Days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, (called Jonathan, Ver. 11.) and Jaddua, were recorded Chief of the Fathers; also the Priests, to the Reign of Darius the Persian.*] This is thought by many to be that *Darius* whom *Alexander* conquered, till whose

Time there were Records kept of the principal Families of the *Levites*, in the Days of those four High Priests, as well as of the Priests already mentioned.

Ver. 23. *The Sons of Levi, the Chief of the Fathers, were written in the Book of the Chronicles, even until the Days of Johanan the Son of Eliashib.*] As there had been a Register of them in the publick Records before that Time from *Jeshua* to *Johanan*. Some think this refers to 1 *Chron.* ix. 14, &c.

Ver. 24. *And the Chief of the Levites; Hashabiah, Sherebiab, and Jeshua the Son of Kadmiel, with their Brethren over against them, to praise, and to give Thanks, according to the Commandment of David the Man of God,*] These were particularly appointed for this Office, which was of great Importance.

Ward over against Ward.] In their Turns, one coming on when another went out, to attend in their Courses, which are called *Wards*.

Ver. 25. *Mattaniah, and Bakkubiah, Obadiab, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were Porters, keeping the Ward at the Thresholds of the Gates.*] Of the House of God, where they attended and performed their Office; or, as some will have it, at the *Treasuries*, as in the Margin of our Bibles.

Ver. 26. *These were in the Days of Jehoiakim, the Son of Jeshua, the Son of Jozadak, and in the Days of Nehemiah the Governour, and of Ezra the Priest, the Scribe.*] It is impossible to give a certain Account why these are so particularly register'd in this Book; but we may be sure there was some great Reason for it in those Days: Perhaps, that it might demonstrate their Care to employ the best Men in all Offices for which they were fit; and that they took special Care to preserve a faithful Record of those who were to serve God as his Ministers, as long as they were a Nation; which they have not a long Time been, and so all Distinctions among them are confounded.

Ver. 27. *And at the Dedication of the Wall of Jerusalem, they sought the Levites out of all their Places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the Dedication with Gladness, both with Thanksgivings, and with singing with Cymbals, Psalteries, and with Harps.*] As *Solomon* and all the Children of *Israel* dedicated the House of the LORD when it was built, (of which see 1 *Kings* viii. 2 *Chron.* vii.) so now *Nehemiah*, having set Things in good Order, thought it meet to dedicate the City, whose Wall was built, and Gates set up (Ver. 30.) as a Place in which God had chosen to dwell, by settling his House here. And therefore they assembled to beseech his Blessing and Protection upon this City; which being made strong, and well defended, they hoped to serve God in his House there with greater Quietness and Security.

The Jewish Doctors are of Opinion, that the Oracle being wanting in the Temple, this Dedication gave no new Sanctity, but only restored it to the old; for it was still *the holy City*, as it is called twice in the foregoing Chapter of this Book, Chap. xi. 1, 18. See *Selden*, Lib. III. De Synedriis, Cap. 13. Sect. 6. where he observes, that it being said here it was dedicated *with a Song* (for so it is in the *Hebrew*) there was some parti-

particular Song of Dedication, which had been formerly used, which was now sung upon this Occasion. And some think, that ever after this Time they made a yearly Commemoration of this Dedication, as they conceive there was of Solomon's Dedication of the Temple. For the Heathen, who imitated the Jews (whose Temple Solomon built two hundred and sixty three Years before Rome was built,) were wont so to do. But Selden thinks Hospinianus rightly judges, that the Maccabees kept the first Anniversary Dedication, Cap. 14. Sect. 7. and upon another Account.

Ver. 28. *And the Sons of the Singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain Country round about Jerusalem, and from the Villages of Netophathi.*

Ver. 29. *Also from the House of Gilgal, and out of the Fields of Geba and Azmaveth:]* These were the Places where they had settled their Habitations; from whence, upon Nehemiah's Summons, they came to be present and assist at this Solemnity.

For the Singers had builded them Villages round about Jerusalem.] That they might be the more ready to attend the Service of God when there should be Occasion.

Ver. 30. *And the Priests and the Levites purified themselves,]* With certain Ablutions and Expiations, that especially which is mentioned in Numb. xix. where a *Water of Separation* is prescribed to purify all Uncleanness, Ver. 9, &c. which is called the *Water of Purifying*, Numb. viii. 7.

And purified the People, and the Gates, and the Wall.] By sprinkling, I suppose, the same Water upon them, and by Prayers and Sacrifices.

Ver. 31. *Then I brought up the Princes of Judah upon the Wall, and appointed two great Companies of them that gave Thanks,]* So the LXX translate the Hebrew Words, *Shetbe tothoth גדולות, שְׁתֵּבָה תוֹתוֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת, two great for Praise*, that is, *two great Choirs*, as the Vulgar translate it, which most Versions follow. But our great Selden thinks the Words should be translated, *two Eucharistical Sacrifices*, prepared for the Altars, which was proper to the present Business. The Spanish Jews translate the Words, *two grand Processions*, Lib. III. de Syned. Cap. 13. Sect. 6. p. 210. And see Dr. Hammond upon Psalm xxiv. Annot. p. 139.

Whereof one went on the Right Hand upon the Wall toward the Dung-Gate:] We add those Words, *whereof the one*, because of the other mentioned, Ver. 38. but in the Hebrew the Words are, *going on the Right, &c.*

Ver. 32. *And after them went Hosbaiah, and Half of the Princes of Judah.*

Ver. 33. *And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,]* Not Ezra the Scribe, who was in a more honourable Place, Ver. 36.

Ver. 34. *Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.*

Ver. 35. *And certain of the Priests Sons with Trumpets, namely, Zechariah the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Shemaiah, the Son of Mattaniah, the Son of Michaiab, the Son of Zaccur, the Son of Asaph.*

Ver. 36. *And his Brethren Shemaiah, and Azarai, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, and*

Judah, Hanani, with the musical Instruments of David, the Man of God, and Ezra the Scribe before them.] They in this Verse and the former were Priests; and therefore Ezra, who was an eminent Priest, led them up at the Head of them.

Ver. 37. *And at the Fountain-Gate, which was over against them, they went up by the Stairs of the City of David,]* See Chap. iii. 15.

At the going up of the Wall, above the House of David, even unto the Water-Gate Eastward.

Ver. 38. *And the other Company of them that gave Thanks, went over against them, and I after them, and the Half of the People upon the Wall, from beyond the Tower of the Furnaces, even unto the broad Wall.*

Ver. 39. *And from above the Gate of Ephraim, and above the old Gate, and above the Fish-Gate, and the Tower of Hananeel, and the Tower of Meab, even unto the Sheep-Gate; and they stood still in the Prison-Gate.*

Ver. 40. *So stood the two Companies of them that gave Thanks in the House of God, and I, and the Half of the Rulers with me:]* The great Man before mentioned translates the first Words, *So stood the two Eucharistical Sacrifices in the House of God.*

The Order wherein they thus marched in a pompous Manner round about the City, now seems a little obscure: But the Sense of the whole Description is this; That they being met together in the same Place, Half of the Rulers went upon the Wall on the Right Hand, accompanied with several Priests and Levites, and Ezra the Scribe at the Head of them (Ver. 36.) and the other Half took the Left Hand, and walked upon the Wall in the same Order, accompanied with Nehemiah, who brought up the Rear of them, (Ver. 38.) And at length both Parts of this Chorus met in the Temple; and there they stood still, and compleated their Praises and Thanksgivings, and offered Sacrifices, as it here follows. Where all the People walked, it is not certain, but only that half of them went with Nehemiah upon the Wall; the rest, it is likely, walking below, because the Wall could not contain them.

Ver. 41. *And the Priests, Eliakim, Maseiah, Miniamin, Michaiab, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with Trumpets.*

Ver. 42. *And Maseiah, and Shemaiah, and Elcazar, and Uzzi, and Jehobanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer; and the Singers sang loud with Jezrabiab their Overseer.]* It doth not appear that they sounded the Trumpets or sung while they were in the Procession, but the Song and the Musick began when they came to the House of God.

Ver. 43. *Also that Day they offered great Sacrifices, and rejoiced;]* Feasting, I suppose, upon the Eucharistical Sacrifices which were then offered.

For God had made them rejoice with great Joy;] By restoring the holy City to such a secure Condition, that they praised the LORD there without Fear of Disturbance.

The Wives also and the Children rejoiced:] It was an universal Joy.

So that the Joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.] The Singers sung with such loud Voices,

Voices, and had so many loud Instruments, the Women and Children also shouting, that they might be heard at a great Distance. Or, the Meaning may be, that the Report of it was spread into far distant Countries.

Ver. 44. *And at that Time were some appointed over the Chambers for the Treasures, for the Offerings, for the First-Fruits, and for the Tithes, to gather into them out of the Fields of the Cities the Portions of the Law for the Priests and Levites:]* By the Treasures, he means those Places where the Oblations, First-Fruits, Tithes (which they had promised to pay duly, Chap. x. 31, &c.) were laid up, and preserved for the Use of the Priests and Levites: Of which that they might not be defrauded, a certain Officer was at this Time appointed, to see they were brought in according to the Law, and to take care that every one had his Portion.

For Judah rejoiced for the Priests, and for the Levites that waited.] They were so glad to see such a great Concourse of them (Ver. 27, &c.) and that they performed their Duty upon this Occasion to the general Satisfaction of all that were present, that their Hearts were enlarged in Love to them, which moved them to take care they should never want the Provision appointed by God for them.

Ver. 45. *And both the Singers and the Porters kept the Ward of their God, and the Ward of the Purification,]* These and other Ministers (who also were Levites) did their Duty so carefully, that they were much in the People's Favour. For the Singers kept the Ward of their God, that is, sung orderly in their Courses, and praised God; and the Porters kept the Ward of Purification, that is, duly observed the Orders about Purification, in not suffering any unclean Person or unclean Thing to come into the House of God.

According to the Commandment of David, and of Solomon his Son.] Who had regulated all Things belonging to the Duty of these Persons. See 1 Chron. xxv. xxvi.

Ver. 46. *For in the Days of David and Asaph, of old, there was Chief of the Singers, and Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving unto God.]* There were other famous Men joined with Asaph, viz. Heman and Jeduthun; but he was the principal Person whom David employed in this Regulation. And this Verse gives the Reason why the Levites and the Singers performed their Duty so accurately; because from the Time of David, who constituted their Orders and Offices, there were some great Men who presided over them, and were careful both to instruct them in their Duty, and keep them to it.

Ver. 47. *And all Israel in the Days of Zerubbabel, and in the Days of Nehemiah, gave the Portions of the Singers, and the Porters, every Day his Portion:]* Those Men that were appointed to look after the Treasures, mentioned Ver. 44. did their Duty so well, that these inferior Officers, much less the rest of the Levites and Priests, never wanted what was due unto them, but had it every Day while Zerubbabel and Nehemiah governed.

And they sanctified holy Things unto the Levites, and the Levites sanctified them unto the Children of Aaron.] The People separated and set apart

the tenth Part of their Crop for the Use of the Levites; and the Levites separated from their Tithes, the tenth Part of them for the Priests. For the People had no Right to the tenth Part, but it was holy, that is, to be separated from the rest for God's Ministers the Levites; and the Levites had no Right to the tenth Part of their Tithe which they had received from the People, but it was to be set apart (which is called sanctified) for the Children of Aaron, that is, the Priests.

C H A P. XIII.

Ver. 1. **O**N that Day they read in the Book of Moses in the Audience of the People; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite, and the Moabite, should not come into the Congregation of God for ever:] This was not done upon the Day of the Dedication of the Wall of the City, but upon some Day after Nehemiah was returned to Jerusalem from Persia, whither he went to wait upon the King, (Ver. 6.) For it is not likely that the People, who were so well affected to the Ministers of God, as we read in the foregoing Chapter, should so soon forget and neglect them; or that those who were appointed to look after their Concerns (Chap. xii. 44.) should be turned out of their Office immediately, or lay aside all Care of them: For it is apparent, from Ver. 10. of this Chapter, their Dues were not paid them when Nehemiah was not there to look after them. But when he was returned, all this was amended, and other Abuses corrected: He continuing the publick Reading of the Law at stated Times, probably on the great Festivals, when all the People met together (such as those mentioned Chap. viii.) upon some Day of which that Portion of Scripture was read, in Deut. xxiii. 3. which forbids the Admission of the Ammonites and Moabites into the Congregation of the LORD; the Meaning whereof see in my Annotations there. I will only add here, that they who by the Congregation of God in this Place, understand the publick Assemblies for divine Worship, are very much mistaken: For no Man of any Nation was forbidden to come and pray to God at the Temple, but Men of every Nation, who would become Profelytes, were admitted into their Communion; and if they would be circumcised, had like Privileges with all other Israelites, even to eat the Passover, Exod. xii. 48, 49. They therefore that think the Meaning is, they should be excluded from all publick Offices, interpret it better: But that is not the Truth neither; for it is to be understood of marrying with them, as I have shewn in the Explication of that Law.

Ver. 2. *Because they met not the Children of Israel with Bread and with Water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them; howbeit, our God turned the Curse into a Blessing.]* See upon Deut. xxiii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *Now it came to pass when they heard the Law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed Multitude.]* Who were born of Strangers, whom the Law would not allow to partake of the Rights of Marriage with Israelites.